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The Week

THE country's response to Mr. Hoover's suggestion that Mr. Roosevelt consult with him on the immediate problem of the war debts has divided along partisan lines. To the Republicans, it seemed like a generous gesture, an offer of what would be practically a coalition government from now until March. The Democrats, however, have seen in it an attempt to pass the buck regarding a particularly difficult problem, to compel Mr. Roosevelt to step, at a moment's notice, into the midst of a complicated matter to which he has at present no legal relation whatever. We should say that which interpretation is correct depends upon facts which can be revealed only after the event. It would obviously be foolish for Mr. Hoover to initiate, or attempt to initiate, long-range policies now when Mr. Roosevelt can destroy them three and a half months hence. But it would be equally undesirable for him to try to rush Mr. Roosevelt into endorsing today Republican policies which his sober second judgment would reject. The danger of such a denouement is perhaps diminished by the fact that on war debts, one party's stand is as bad as the other's. We hope that the President and the President-elect will face the realities of the situation, forget the foolish commitments of the campaign, and go a long way toward doing what has to be done.

THE Federal Reserve Banks report that in the Election Day week there was a sudden increase of $35,000,000 in the currency in circulation, and the newspapers report that "this was due to Election Day requirements." It would be extremely interesting to know why this money was drawn out of the banks. Many business houses were closed for part or all of the day, and it is general experience that for those who remained open, Election Day business was bad. To be sure, there are many election officials who have to be paid, but there can be only a small proportion of them who receive their remuneration in cash on Election Day. What other legitimate reasons are there for suddenly taking from the banks about one dollar per voter? Was this money drawn out in the expectation of paying election bets? Or to use in celebrating the result? Or was it employed for more ominous purposes? Does it, possibly, help to explain the surprising vote in Pennsylvania, which was carried by the Republicans, although the straw polls indicated it would go to Roosevelt by several hundred thousands? Possibly the investigation which is to be made of the balloting in that state will throw some light on the question.

DR. Nicholas Murray Butler has for years cherished the curious illusion that the Republican party could be made over into a liberal political organization. His recent pronouncement that the party has long been on the slide, and will vanish as did the Federalists and Whigs long ago unless young and liberal forces take it over, was made at an opportune time. He is undoubtedly right that the occasion of a disastrous defeat gives an opportunity for younger leaders to displace old and discredited ones. Nevertheless he is indulging in wish-fulfilment rather than in practical politics when he assumes that the new direction will be any more liberal than the old. A hard-shell politician, commenting on his statement, pointed out that the Democrats won their present victory not through any reorganization after the debacle of 1928, or through any positive merit of their own, but because the people voted against the party in

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power during the depression. If business does not get better under the Democrats, the people are likely to turn about and vote the Republicans in again in 1936, no matter what they do or don't do. Old parties don't change their skins just to get elected; if we are to have a new political organization it must be based on a new grouping of interests and ideas, and must raise its campaign contributions from different sources. The Republican party is our Tory party, and it is bound to remain so as long as Tories have power in the economic system.

LAST spring, the Geneva Conference on Limitation of Armament took a long recess because the only alternative was an open confession of hopeless disagreement. Now the subject is reopened by the publication of a revised French plan which links together, in the customary French way, the questions of increased security for herself and general limitation of armament. The details of this plan hardly seem worth discussing. They include the familiar proposal that the United States shall offer definite guarantees to join in the defense of the existing status in Europe, including the fruits of Versailles, against any attempt at forcible alteration. Nothing is clearer than that neither the United States nor Great Britain, in their present mood, is prepared to undertake such a commitment. Since the French know this perfectly well, the conclusion is irresistible that the present plan is put forward not with any expectation or hope that it will be accepted, but as a means of saving the faces of the French politicians and, possibly, as useful equipment when the next session of international bargaining starts, at the world economic conference in the spring.

WHILE the United States was holding its election on November 8, another election was in progress which was also closely related to us. On that day the people of Nicaragua voted in a new regime, under the "guardianship" of an American electoral commission and the bayonets of the comparatively few American Marines who are left in that country. The election was won by the so-called Liberals (the party labels have little significance), though it is reported that the Conservatives are to be well represented in the new Congress. Of particular interest to this country, however, is the fact that this is the last election to be held under the control of the United States. The electoral commission is coming home; the last of the Marines will have left Nicaragua by March 1. Thus ends—we hope—another chapter of our inglorious Caribbean adventure. If on the whole it is less to our discredit than Haiti or Cuba, it is still one of which we have no right to be proud.

THE other day, in the city of Chicago, organizations of the unemployed made a series of proposals to the officials in charge of relief administration. They urged that relief funds be passed out in the form of cash instead of rations, stated their position in favor of increased taxes on wealth and opposed the state sales tax, which is now under consideration in Illinois, on the proper ground that it bears most heavily on the poor, who can least afford to pay. The Chicago Tribune, commenting on these demands, remarks that the officials should have "invited the delegates to take their hats and clear out . . . not because the proposals were silly, though they were, but because the proposals were impertinent." As The Tribune explains:

> The recipients of unemployment relief are objects of charity. They are on the county. It was their duty to support themselves and their families and in addition to help support the common government. For one reason or another they have failed to make the grade. The community has recognized the fact that an economic hurricane has wiped out the jobs and savings of many stalwart citizens and the recognition has taken the form of private gifts and public contributions for relief. The money has been given not because the victims of the hurricane have a right to it but because the community has a heart and wishes to prevent physical suffering.
>
> No one expected the spokesmen for the "organized unemployed" to express gratitude, but the commission had a right to expect them to display common sense. The assumption in the minds of the spokesmen was that they are entitled to support by right and to levy the taxes which support them in idleness. It is a false assumption, and if it is allowed to go unchallenged it will place a premium on incompetence, laziness and shiftlessness. . . .

In other words, if the unemployed are foolish enough to chose to live under a capitalist system which can only proceed by one depression after another, it is strictly a matter of option with the rulers of that system whether or not these unemployed shall be allowed to die of starvation. Here is a blunt doctrine, bluntly put. We only wonder why The Tribune did not go on to recommend that in the interest of economy and a balanced municipal budget, those out of work, their wives and children, should have been allowed to starve some time ago. The unemployed soon turn into the unemployable; and the advance of technology would in any case destroy the jobs for a great part of them (all of them, if Mr. Howard Scott and his Technocracy friends are correct). Dean Swift once recommended for the famine in Ireland that the victims should kill and eat their babies. Dean Swift was a piker.

THE award of the Nobel Prize for Literature to John Galsworthy will be generally approved, with the reservation that the recognition comes too late to be of great contemporary significance. Mr. Galsworthy is a conspicuous instance of a writer who has outlived himself. He was one of the novelists, with Conrad, Bennett and Wells, who gave the Edwardian period distinction in fiction.

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Among the four he preserved most faithfully the tradition of English realism, enriched by new technical devices, resulting in the sharper specification of character and environment and the deeper implication of hidden forces through symbolism. "The Forsyte Saga" is the typical family record of its period, standing midway between Thackeray's "The Newcomes" and, let us say, Mr. Aldous Huxley's "Point Counter Point." In one respect the selection of Mr. Galsworthy is beyond dispute justified. He represents the idealistic, humanitarian impulse which it is one purpose of the Foundation to recognize. Very much of Mr. Galsworthy's fiction and drama has been concerned with the great social tragedy of the opposition of classes, the rich and the poor. In the Forsytes he has given a perfect account in behavior and psychology of the acquisitive urban rich; and in "The Country House" and "The Patrician" an equally perfect picture of the merely possessing rich of the countryside. In "Fraternity" and "The Freelands" he has dealt with the problem of bridging the gap between rich and poor, in city and country. In "The Silver Box" and "Justice" he has demonstrated Disraeli's axiom that they are two nations, not governed by the same laws. Mr. Galsworthy does not write hopefully of the future of society. His gentle, urbane irony masks a pessimism which is the more mordant because it does not strive or cry. Mr. Galsworthy belongs with the group of English writers who find significance in consciousness and intelligence rather than in the unconscious and instinctive —with Mill, George Eliot and Meredith rather than Carlyle, Dickens and Hardy. He does not share the faith of his forbears in the triumph of wisdom and good will over stupidity and selfishness to save the world.

NOW that the full texts of the Ottawa agreements are becoming public in the process of ratification by Parliament, fears of the disturbing nature of the arrangements are being confirmed. They constitute a strengthening of the principle of imperial preference not merely by a lowering of tariffs within the British Commonwealth, but also by an increase of tariffs against outsiders. Tariff walls about the whole group of nations are, on balance, considerably increased. In eighty-three out of one hundred and thirty-two tariff changes made by Canada, for instance, preferential rates to Great Britain remain unaltered, while the rates against foreigners are increased. Great Britain may be able to sell a little more in the Dominions, but will meet increased difficulties of export elsewhere. At the same time she has tied herself to the existing arrangement for five years and hence cannot share, much less take the lead, during that period, in any world movement for lower tariffs. This seems to raise an insuperable barrier to Roosevelt's program of tariff bargaining. British economists see an intensification of domestic difficulties due to the fact that food will cost more under the new arrangement, and production costs will presumably be increased. America loses perhaps $75,000,000 of trade, largely in the form of iron and steel, machinery and automobile exports to Canada, and agricultural exports to the United Kingdom. About 80 percent of our exports to the latter are now subject to duty as opposed to about 30 percent in 1930. Particularly hard hit will be pork products, wheat, apples, pears, canned salmon, tobacco and cotton.

SOME of the leading economists of the United States—as well as of other nations—have contended ever since the War that German reparations could not be paid, and hence that there would be difficulty in collecting the war debts of the Allies. Among these one of the pioneers was Dr. Harold G. Moulton of the Brookings Institution, which has just issued a new study, "War Debts and World Prosperity," indicating how completely the formal payments made in the past depended on loans extended from the ultimate creditor—the United States—to Germany and the other ultimate debtors. But there were American economists of repute who used to contend that Germany could pay. Among these were prominently listed Professors Jacob Viner of the University of Chicago and James W. Angell of Columbia. It is interesting to note that these two men are members of the committee of seven economists which now declares in a report sponsored by the Twentieth Century Fund and approved by a group of leading citizens, that the debts must be revised downward. Dr. Moulton must be glad to welcome these recruits to his opinion. They may still contend, of course, that in theory they were correct; that Germany and the Allies could have paid if it had not been for the depression. Dr. Moulton could reply that the attempt to collect was one of the causes of the depression. However the conflict of theory may be resolved, it is of practical importance that both groups of experts are now aligned in support of debt reduction.

STATISTICAL antiquarians have been saying that the price of wheat was as low back in the 1500's as it is now—though how English currency before Queen Bess can be equated with 1932 cents is a little difficult for us to understand. Certainly comparisons of this kind have no real meaning. What has a meaning, however, is the statistical presentation of the present situation, which has all along indicated that the rise in wheat prices occurring last summer could not be maintained. (This is not wisdom after the event; The New Republic said so at the time.) Total available world supplies of wheat are estimated by the Food Research Institute of Stanford University at 4,608,000,000 bushels for the 1931-32 season—the largest ever known except for the previous year. Total disappearance (consumption and increase in "invisible" stocks) plus normal carry-over is estimat-

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ed at 4,270,000,000 bushels, leaving a surplus of 338,000,000. This is, to be sure, less than 10 percent of the total world supply, but it is the largest surplus ever recorded except last year, and it is ample to have a depressing effect on prices, especially in view of the fact that it amounts to more than 40 percent of the net wheat exports of the exporting nations. Europe's production is large; yields per acre have increased appreciably in Germany, France, Italy and Spain; and all these countries have a prohibitive tariff on wheat. United States wheat is about to be virtually shut out of the British market by the Ottawa agreements. As The London Economist says, putting the matter in its usual conservative language, "while, therefore, farmers can scarcely expect an increase in world consumption during the coming season, their only hope lies in a substantial reduction of the acreage to be sown, coupled with an effort to reduce costs to the lowest possible level."

IN The New Republic of October 19 we published an editorial entitled "Real Estate Men on Trial." In this article, we pointed out that Congress has given the Reconstruction Finance Corporation $1,500,000,000 to be used in self-liquidating public works; that some of this money might well be allotted to the construction of housing for the poor and that the response of the real-estate men to this project would be an acid test of their good citizenship. Up to now, it must be admitted that their response has been a bitterly disappointing one. In order to use the Reconstruction Finance Corporation's money, the individual states must pass laws modeled in general on that of New York; but partly because of the opposition of private builders and partly for other reasons only two states—Ohio and Texas—have passed such laws. When the Reconstruction Finance Corporation made its first loan of a few million dollars for model housing in New York City, the real-estate men put up a howl which could be, and was, heard all the way to Washington. They managed to win over Acting Mayor McKee, who obviously knows little about housing, and has been swayed by the plausible propaganda of the landlords. We shall not repeat again the arguments already made in our pages in favor of using government money for housing experiments, even though there are many vacant apartments, and although, in a city like New York, they may rent for as much as $10 or $11 per room per month. We would simply point out, first, that the landlords never show any concern for the housing of the very poor until somebody else proposes to do something about it; and second, that even those landlords who are on the verge of bankruptcy would profit greatly if there were a partial restoration of prosperity. Congress, in making this money available to the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, intended that it should be spent, and spent quickly, for exactly this purpose.

AS Nathaniel Weyl pointed out in The New Republic of November 16, the students of City College, in New York, have lately been in a state of widespread rebellion against the authorities. Mass meetings have been held, resolutions passed, classes have been broken up or have been conducted under police guard. But more subtle ways have also been adopted of making the college authorities wish they had never been born. There is, for example, the matter of the annual undergraduate play. When the students were recently asked to make their choice, they came forward sweetly with "Merry-Go-Round." This play, it may be remembered, relates the inside story of New York's municipal corruption. It tells the tale so well that when it was produced on Broadway, last spring, Tammany's anguished cohorts first refused to license a theatre for it and then used every fair and foul means to kill it. City College is under the control of Tammany's Board of Higher Education, which would cut off both hands well above the elbow before it would do anything to hurt the feelings of Boss Curry. Permission to produce "Merry-Go-Round" was refused, as the students of course knew in advance that it would be. The professional torturers of ancient China had nothing to teach these up-and-coming lads.

GOVERNOR Jim Rolph of California has announced his intention of pardoning all the prisoners in the state who are being punished for violation of the California prohibition-enforcement law, the state having repealed this statute by a popular vote of two to one on November 8. This action will meet the approval of sensible people; but they will also remember that Governor Rolph has refused to do anything for Tom Mooney and Warren Billings, who have been in prison for sixteen years without having committed any crime whatever. They are being punished for holding political and economical views which are not popular with the majority. In short, it seems that the way to get out of jail in California is to break an unpopular law, but to think as much as possible like Sunny Jim Rolph.

SWITZERLAND, of all places, has been the scene of a tragic conflict between troops and citizens. Several companies of extremely young soldiers were brought to Geneva from other cities to keep order in a large crowd of Socialists and Communists engaged in a demonstration. Evidently believing that the soldiers would not use their firearms, the citizens jeered at them and refused to move when requested to do so. The soldiers fired, and twelve persons were killed or mortally wounded. This incident amounted to plain murder by the authorities; and the person guilty is the official who put rifles into the hands of what are virtually children and sent them out into the streets. The lesson of the incident is one which may be applied in other countries—including the United States.

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The War Debt Incubus

IT IS important to get a few things straight with reference to the war-debt payments. Opinion in the United States is slowly coming about to the position long held by The New Republic—that while these payments are legally and morally due, they must either be canceled in their entirety or substantially reduced, because of their economic absurdity. A great many persons who incline to this opinion still believe, however, that in forgoing any part of the payment we shall be doing the Allies a favor for which we are entitled to demand a *quid pro quo,* and that we should bargain on this basis. President Hoover in his invitation to President-elect Roosevelt for a consultation on the matter mentions the long cherished scheme of demanding arms reduction in return for reconsideration of the debts, as well as his newer plan of obtaining an extension of foreign markets for our crops. Is there any wisdom in this sort of bargain? In order to clear our minds on this point, let us state a few elementary propositions concerning the debts.

We have no choice between receiving the debt payments in full and scaling them down. This choice does not exist, because no matter what we decide, the debts cannot be paid in full. If we continue to demand payment according to existing agreement, the result will be merely that payments will be defaulted, or perhaps even that the debts will be repudiated. The real choice lies between default and voluntary reduction on our part. The committee of economists which has just reported for the Twentieth Century Fund makes this clear. Merely on account of the decline of prices, the burden of the debts has been increased by 50 percent during the depression. In addition, international commerce has been so restricted that the foreign commodity trade of the debtor nations, and hence their capacity to pay, is only 60 percent of what it was in 1929. Many of these nations have reached the limit of yield in rates of taxation and are confronted with serious budgetary problems. Aside from these considerations, their capacity to transfer payment has been reduced by the necessary cessation of reparations receipts from Germany. Reparations formerly furnished most of the money to pay Allied debts—and our loans to Germany furnished the money to pay reparations.

The London Economist presents some interesting figures on the possibility of payment of the December 15 instalment from Great Britain. Whereas the annuity paid in 1923 represented a value equivalent to six months' exports from Britain to America at that time, the payment due this year represents four years' exports at the present rate. For how many years could Britain pay us *every year,* the value of *four years'* exports? At the current rate of exchange, the half-year's interest, plus principal instalments, equals about £30,000,000. In the last six months for which figures are available, Britain, our largest customer next to Canada, purchased goods worth £44,000,000. To balance against these imports, she exported to us goods worth only £8,750,000. On trade with us alone, therefore, she has an adverse balance of nearly £35,000,000, to be made up by indirect trade through other countries, by the earnings of British shipping or other invisible exports. When to this adverse balance is added the £30,000,000 on account of the war debt, there is no possibility of earning the resources in foreign currency necessary to settle the accounts. To pay, she must seriously diminish her gold reserve or her reserve of foreign currencies, thus creating further embarrassment for the pound. Obviously, this sort of thing cannot long continue. The ultimate choice, it must be repeated, is between reduction of the debts and default. We shall not in any case receive full payment.

Reduction of the debt payments would be, not a favor granted to the Allies, but an act in our own interest. Default, which is the only alternative to reduction, would injure confidence, freeze many private foreign debts which might otherwise be good, and prevent any prompt renewal of the flow of short-term credits and investments abroad. It would injure rather than improve foreign markets for American goods. These markets are important to us, and especially to wheat and cotton growers. Any improvement at all in the economic situation such as might result from even a slight revival in foreign trade would be worth more than receipt of the debt payments. An increase of one percent in the present low level of our national income would more than make up for the loss of the debt payments, which we shall not receive in any case.

We are therefore not in a position to drive a hard bargain in debt negotiations. We should not reluctantly concede something which it is to our own advantage to concede—and that as soon as possible. A prompt settlement would be worth infinitely more than a settlement delayed to bargain for some other advantage. If our foreign markets for wheat, cotton and other agricultural products are to be revived, for instance, they would be revived as a result of the increase in purchasing power which might follow reduction of debts, fully as much as from any agreement on tariffs or import restrictions which might be negotiated in a debt conference. It is important for those who are to consider the matters to come before the forthcoming world economic conference to know, as a first premise, what the war-debt situation is to be. This difficulty must be cleared out of the way before further progress can be made.

Any promise about arms reduction which might be exacted in return for debt reduction would be worthless. Pronouncements of individual statesmen on the question of armament reduction mean

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nothing; only ratified treaties specifying in detail how armaments are to be reduced will accomplish the result. Nations will not negotiate and ratify treaties of this sort unless they are convinced that their interests and safety are compatible with so doing. We cannot force any nation into an arms agreement by pressure for debt collection. We can bring about arms reduction only by convincing nations that they ought, in their own interest, to reduce. If the economic pressure already being exerted to reduce armaments will not bring about that result, it is unlikely that the pressure of war debts will do so. Nations which believe it essential to maintain existing armaments will maintain them and let the debts go to default.

Settlement of the war-debt difficulty is only a first step in world reconstruction. Many things will remain to be done after this question is settled; these other problems are too large and cumbersome to be thrown into the same pot. There must follow adjustments of private debts, arms reduction, removal of trade barriers, stability of currencies. It will take many months at least to untangle these confusions. It is important to make haste by answering the simplest and most obvious questions first. After all these things have been done, the economic world *may* have a chance to stabilize itself. We should not be too timid to take the first step promptly, recognizing that the road ahead of it is mountainous and long.

"Cuba Libre"

THE HURRICANE which swept over Cuba last week only added one more to the recent list of miseries of that unhappy country. Economically, Cuba is prostrate; politically, it is in the grip of an iron dictatorship as merciless as any in the world today.

The recent election was of course a triumph for President Machado, as everyone knew it would be. His enemies did not dare go to the polls; they were aware that even if they risked reprisals by voting, their ballots were not likely to be counted. The dictator is for the present still reasonably secure in the saddle; but that the days of his regime are numbered is the growing conviction of those who have had first-hand contact with the leaders of the movement for revolt.

The terroristic methods of Machado have often been described and are familiar to informed Americans. Some prominent Cubans who have had the courage to defy the dictator are hiding in foreign legations; others are locked up in the medieval fortress-prisons. Hundreds of labor leaders, newspaper editors and other outstanding opponents have been arrested; some of them have simply disappeared between two days, no clue ever reaching their families and friends as to what has become of them, while still others have been shot, in accordance with the time-honored formula, "while resisting arrest." Among the recent victims have been the three Freyre de Andrade brothers, who were shot down in their home. One of them had written a book, since suppressed, attacking the Chadbourne sugar plan and the banks which support it, while another had had the temerity to defend a political prisoner in the Machado-controlled courts.

That the United States must bear an important part of the responsibility for the continuance of the bloody Cuban dictatorship is well known. The American banks which have fostered the Chadbourne sugar plan, in order to safeguard their own loans, are for Machado. So is the American State Department. So, broadly speaking, is American Ambassador Guggenheim. The Platt Amendment, as everyone knows, pledges us to maintain a free and orderly government in Cuba, one which preserves the liberties of the people. But as everyone also knows, we do no such thing. If we were hostile to Machado, he would fall in a week. If we were even neutral in fact, he would fall in a month. As we support him, he continues in power. American police, in New York, Atlantic City, Miami and elsewhere, harass the Cuban revolutionists in their attempted operations quite as vigorously as though they were in the pay of Machado himself.

The economic conditions in Cuba at present are so bad that it is difficult to see how they could get much worse, without wholesale starvation. For these conditions the general depression is of course in part responsible; but the United States must also take much of the blame. Our tariff on sugar is helping to cripple Cuba's most important industry, and it is Americans who have put over the Chadbourne plan, which has thus far failed absolutely to help the Cuban workers. Today, starving, ragged people are roaming the Cuban countryside. Homeless families are walking the streets of Havana, and the desperation of the victims encourages every sort of vice and crime. President Machado continues to rule; but he is sitting on a volcano whose eruption will be the more violent—and the more certain—the longer it is delayed.

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Were the Straw Polls Right?

THE ELECTION of Franklin D. Roosevelt can hardly be called a surprise. Long before a single vote had been cast, the probability of his elevation to the White House was widely known and discounted. Newspapers carried stories of an impending Democratic sweep, the betting odds were overwhelmingly in favor of Roosevelt and political managers privately conceded or publicly proclaimed the inevitable result.

While before the election there were many signs pointing to the desire of the people for a change in leadership, the clearest evidence of it was supplied by the straw votes. As early as mid-August the Hearst newspapers were reporting a political cyclone in the offing and in later weeks this warning was repeated by The Literary Digest and by other publications which were gathering straw ballots. Now that the storm which was predicted has passed, it is important that some account be taken of the most recent experience with these straw-vote barometers, for they are rapidly becoming a fixed part of the American political system: What, precisely, was the accuracy of the principal 1932 polls and what part are straw polls likely to play in future campaigns?

On the basis of returns compiled by the Associated Press, which are 90 percent complete, the average error of The Literary Digest in predicting state presidential pluralities proved to be 7 percent per state. To make the meaning of this index clear, the magazine's experience in the state of Oregon may be described. In the straw returns from this state, sixty-four out of every one hundred votes were marked for Mr. Roosevelt, the remaining thirty-six (we are here excluding the minor vote for the sake of simplicity) favoring Mr. Hoover. This was an indicated Democratic excess of twenty-eight votes for every one hundred cast. On November 8 the official division of the vote between the two major candidates was in the ratio of sixty-one to thirty-nine, giving Roosevelt an advantage of twenty-two votes for every one hundred cast. The Literary Digest poll thus overpredicted Roosevelt's plurality in Oregon by six votes per one hundred, or 6 percent of the total recorded vote, an error slightly under the average for the forty-eight states. Most commentators in judging the accuracy of the straw vote would look only to the fact that the winner was correctly predicted in Oregon, but this is not a serviceable criterion, since The Digest could have given Roosevelt anywhere from 51 to 100 percent of the straw vote and still have placed the state correctly in the Electoral College. Elections are won and lost by the division of the vote between the candidates, hence the predictive accuracy of a straw poll can be judged only by the degree of precision with which it foreshadows this division.

To continue with The Literary Digest, the current poll, with an average plurality error of 7 percent per state, was more accurate than either the 1924 or 1928 canvass, each of these earlier polls having missed its mark by an average plurality error of 12 percent per state. All three presidential polls were mail canvasses of telephone and automobile owners, hence the increased precision of the 1932 undertaking was not a matter of improved technique, but was due to circumstances inherent in the election. Specifically, these may have been change in sentiment after the ballots were gathered, reduction of the normal Republican bias of the telephone-automobile mailing list on account of party bolting, and disproportionate participation in the straw poll of the Roosevelt protest vote. The Democratic strength in New England, as in previous polls, was underestimated, causing the states of Massachusetts and Rhode Island to be incorrectly assigned to Mr. Hoover. Other states where the plurality error of the poll and the closeness of the contest resulted in misplacement of the electoral vote were New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware.

The Hearst poll, which was a mail canvass of telephone owners, was slightly less accurate than that of The Literary Digest, scoring an average state plurality error of 10 percent as opposed to 7 percent for its national competitor. However, if the computations be made on the basis of shift of voters from 1928 to 1932, which on account of the known Republican bias of the telephone and automobile mailing lists is probably the more defensible method of interpretation, the Hearst poll, with an average state-plurality error of 4 percent, as against 7 percent for The Digest, becomes the more accurate of the two. Seven states which were won by Mr. Roosevelt were assigned to Mr. Hoover by the Hearst canvass. These were Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Kansas and Colorado. In addition, Delaware was placed in the Democratic column, but finally gave its electoral vote to the G.O.P. Four years ago the Hearst chain scored an average state-plurality error of 5 percent, which was up to that time and still is the best performance for any nationwide poll without the benefit of special interpretation.

In their polls of Ohio, The Columbus Dispatch and The Cincinnati Enquirer scored plurality errors of 26 and 19 percent, respectively. This is the largest error that either paper has incurred in twenty-five years of straw votes in this state. In both

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cases the Roosevelt strength was overestimated. During the last two weeks of the campaign, The Columbus Dispatch repolled a number of counties and found that sentiment for Hoover had considerably improved. The plurality error of this second poll was only 4 percent. Probably, therefore, the large error incurred in the principal polls of these two newspapers was due, for the most part, to change of sentiment after the ballots had been gathered.

The accuracy of other 1932 polls can be judged from their index of error as follows: Binghamton Press, average for four upstate New York counties, 24 percent; Chicago Daily Times, Cook County, Illinois, 3 percent; Des Moines Register, state of Iowa, 6 percent; East St. Louis Journal, East St. Louis, Illinois, 13 percent; Iowa Daily Press Association, state of Iowa, 11 percent; Meriden Record, Meriden, Connecticut, 17 percent; New York Daily News, New York State, 2 percent; Publishers' Autocaster Service and weekly newspapers in forty-two states, average by state, 13 percent; Salt Lake Tribune, state of Utah, one percent; Scripps-Howard papers of Ohio, six counties, average by county for October poll, 9 percent; Youngstown Vindicator, Mahoning County, Ohio, 16 percent.

Other polls were conducted but are not included in this tabulation for the reason that the necessary election data are not in hand at this writing to put them to the acid test.

Summing it all up, the 1932 polls did foreshadow the unprecedented Democratic upset, but erred all the way from one to 24 percent in predicting the size of the pluralities. Since there was a landslide, this error made little difference in calling the electoral vote. But if, four years from now, the struggle for the presidency is as close as it was in 1916, the straw polls may incorrectly predict the winner. Despite the degree of success which these unofficial canvasses have achieved in the election just passed and in earlier elections, the straw poll in its present stage of development must yet be considered a crude instrument of measurement. Much research needs to be done if sampling methodology is to be improved and, also, sponsors of straw polls need to be better schooled in the possibilities and limitations of the straw-vote technique. Granted this, straw polls in the future are likely to reflect the voting sentiment of the electorate with increasing accuracy, and newspapers and periodicals through the use of this tool will be able to make audible to the public the beat of its own political pulse.

This raises an interesting and important question. Some careful observers of politics hold that straw polls make a farce of the American electoral system. There are a great many people, it is said, who have no well defined political convictions and who gain personal satisfaction by aligning themselves with the winning side. When these people learn which party band wagon has the most followers, they fall in line and march in the victory parade. Moreover, in addition to this unfair delivery of the band-wagon vote, straw polls, it is held, wreck the morale of the minority workers, cause campaign contributors to withhold support from the supposedly "lost cause," tempt local candidates of the losing party to knife the head of the ticket in frantic attempts to save their own skins and swell the "stay-at-home" vote by promoting the belief that the election is already settled. Through the undermining of their support, apparent losers are denied the opportunity to present their case fairly and elections tend to be decided by default or by unthinking mob action in place of considered weighing of the issues at stake. While most critics do not say what should be done about straw votes, some venture the suggestion that these canvasses should be prohibited by law, while others reject this proposal in favor of relying on a hostile public opinion to abolish the practice.

This indictment merits careful thought. Unfortunately we do not have concrete evidence on the size of the so-called band-wagon vote or on the influence of straw polls on this class of elector, hence any discussion of these points pretty much boils down to a question of opinion. Recently the writer queried eleven outstanding political leaders of Ohio on the subject and found that three of these men thought that the band-wagon influence of straw votes was quite large, a fourth conceded the possibility of such influence but confessed that the idea had never occurred to him before, while the remaining seven gave it as their opinion that such influence was small, if any. Ohio, it may be said, has been the most polled state in the Union, hence these men had exceptional opportunity to observe the effect of straw polls on the election outcome.

There is nothing to indicate that in the recent campaign Roosevelt's strength generally increased after the straw polls announced the imminence of a Democratic landslide. On the contrary, what meager evidence we have suggests that some shift to Hoover, particularly in the Middle West, occurred after the President began his determined drive. It is possible that the publicity given to straw polls led some voters to follow the Roosevelt band wagon, but at least the rush was not so great as to stem what appears to have been an October drift to the Republican candidate.

The exhilarating or depressing effect that straw polls have on party workers is, of course, a matter of common observation. Ordinarily men's spirits rise when they envisage success and fall when they see only the prospect of defeat. It would be strange indeed if this were not so. But this can hardly be regarded as an argument for the suppression of straw polls. If the sensibilities of party workers must be protected from the truth, then, by all means, these workers should find other occupations, for they can never be successful in

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politics. A good party worker must know how his ticket is faring with the voters, otherwise he cannot direct his electioneering efforts to the greatest advantage. In gaining this knowledge the straw poll may be an extremely useful tool.

Actually, during the campaign just past, straw votes were depended upon to an unusual extent by political leaders for their information on the voting preferences of the people. The Democratic National Committee utilized the services of an able analyst who devoted practically all of his time to the study of straw returns, and the Republican headquarters was likewise staffed with men who knew how to interpret the straws. The Hearst and Literary Digest canvasses, covering all of the forty-eight states, supplied more extensive data than were available from any other source. These polls not alone revealed the cataclysmic nature of the overturn, but they also showed, within their limits of accuracy, the partisan source of each candidate's strength. The Hearst poll, in addition, reported the varying complexion of the male and female vote, which revealed women as slightly more in favor of Mr. Hoover than men. Part of the Republican strategy was directed to the cultivation of this support. The Hearst poll, too, was arranged so that separate tenths of each congressional district were sampled each week during the campaign, the idea being to detect any change in sentiment which might occur. How technically valid these successive measurements were, remains to be threshed out, but certainly this experience suggests the possibility in future campaigns of a continuous record of the electorate's favor, whereby political leaders may judge the success of their electioneering efforts.

For the office holder as well as the office seeker straw polls may have advantage, for the same sampling procedure used to gain information on the preferences of the voters for candidates may also be employed to sound out the wishes of the electorate on broad public issues. The jest, which some people take seriously, that elections might as well be dispensed with in favor of straw polls, can be quickly put out of mind, for in the democratic scheme of things, the wide exercise of the franchise is necessary for the cultivation of the feeling of proprietorship in government on the part of the citizenry and, moreover, reduction of the number of voters would place an increased premium on corruption. The realm of the straw vote, therefore, must remain that of the unofficial.

The success of straw polls, of course, depends not only on the perfection of sampling technique, but more particularly upon the willingness of the people to coöperate. If the citizens should refuse to mark ballots, straw polls would come to a speedy end. Particularly if partisan groups should boycott polls would these canvasses suffer, for unless all shades of opinion are represented in the balloting the returns are quickly distorted and made ridiculous. Whenever polls become obnoxious, therefore, the public has the sure weapon of the boycott to keep them in control.

Apparently public interest in straw polls is growing. More of these unofficial canvasses were made in the 1932 campaign than ever before. Newspapers find that straw reports stimulate great reader interest and build up circulation, and an increasing number of publications are making the gathering of straw ballots a permanent feature of their news service. The interest of the actual participants in the straw votes is no less, for sponsors report a surprising willingness on the part of the public to express its preference.

CLAUDE E. ROBINSON.

Home from a Foreign Shore

IT MAY be different with most people, but when, after a year's residence in the United Kingdom, people welcome me with "Isn't it great to be home!" I confess that to my hearty "You bet!" is appended a short list of mental reservations. Of course I love this great democratic God's Country. I love ice cream, motor cars that will climb hills "in high," the Marx Brothers, confidential taxi drivers, ice in drinks, Pullman discussions of Business Conditions and apple pie *à la mode*. But, although a sojourn abroad does strengthen one's position as America's Best Pal, it also accentuates the tendency to become her Severest Critic. This spirit of criticism ought not to be confined to the Savoy Grill and Zelli's. Manifestly the slogan for returned exiles should be: "Don't send flowers when it's too late. Tell America *now!*"

Perhaps the first thing that happens to the returned native is a sense of physical risk. Every man in a pearl-gray hat and a double-breasted blue suit must be a racketeer and an assassin. Surely *some* of New York's ubiquitous briefcases contain sub-caliber machine guns. With what alarm one observes a stranger making overtures to the baby on the pier! For my part, I tried to subdue these unmanly agitations by assuring myself that I was the victim of the British newspapers, anxious to give America a black eye as a waste land preyed upon by jackals and vipers. An enemy (Lord Beaverbrook mayhap) hath done this! Then I bought a tabloid. Longingly I looked back to

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the ship which in a few days would return to England where crime is frowned upon and where it is perfectly safe to report a burglary or a murder without risk of being whacked with a rubber hose for your trouble.

Even more alarming was the attitude of friends about all this. Almost unanimously they belittled the perils of America and were skeptical of the comparative safety of England. Some of them would tell me, quite naïvely, of wealthy friends in the suburbs of New York or Pittsburgh who live on guarded estates equipped with every form of electrical alarm while armed constables cruise about the premises at night; but a general conclusion from this specific evidence seemed to most of them "unfair." Similarly it was "unfair" to draw any conclusion from the tortuous angling for a tip by the customs inspector or from various assurances that this or that service would cost nothing "but, of course, you'll fix me up." Few seemed to be horrified at the idea of bribing government officials and most insisted that "it's the same the whole world over." My sour suggestion at a cocktail party that "by buying this stuff we are conferring power on a gang of assassins that may well destroy this country" was greeted by derisive shouts that I had gone Methodist. That was one argument that I had supposed would go over in Wet circles. As a generality, yes; but not specifically. "You don't think nice little Eddie Humpeldinger would murder anybody, do you?" I'm not discussing my manners at the moment; only America's strange reluctance to face facts; her contentment—far surpassing that of the English—with an anomaly: her resentment, which would never occur to the English, at the fact that it *is* an anomaly.

It doesn't take more than three days for the returning American to reach the conclusion that the greatest danger to his dearly beloved country is this romantic blindness to realities. The vast and menacing corruption from the extra-legal liquor business is debonairly brushed aside with, "Well, so long as the speakeasies have good stuff, what the hell?" The depression is met either by black despair and the defenestrations of stock-brokers or by the Christian Science of Mr. Hoover, who attributes the whole thing to European Mortal Error, and now by the New Thought of Mr. Roosevelt, who promises a New Deal when the aces are locked up in bondholders' strong boxes. England, at least, has plunged to the heart of the matter by cutting interest on her war loan from 5 percent to 3½ percent, and by timely and rigorous taxation. She has kept her unemployed out of bread lines and bonus camps by a "dole" toward which the unemployed have previously made contributions. But in the midst of black despair my friends continue to denounce the "dole" as less "American" than support of the idle by apple selling, street-corner violin solos and Community Chests toward which the beneficiaries contribute nothing but a sour gratitude. Even after her amazingly alert job in reducing fixed charges on the war loan, I find Britain still spoofed in these parts as "unprogressive," when our sole contribution to the solution of the deflation problem is to dump our cats and dogs into the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and hope for the best.

This resistance to reality has amazing manifestations. One loyal American explained to me carefully that the Lindbergh kidnaping had been "greatly exaggerated in the English press." Another told me he thought that the revelations of the Seabury Committee could be duplicated in any English city if anybody took the trouble to investigate. Another comforted himself with the statement that "any man with the stuff can get a job if he really looks for it." Such easy hopes and deceptions block the way to the goal and delay the game. A national moratorium of two months on the idea, in all its aspects, that we lead the world in every field and have nothing to learn from anybody would be a longer step toward ending the depression than anything I can think of at the moment. It would end the false pride which prevents us from admitting the folly of electing judges, demanding debt payments while excluding them by tariffs, entrusting our political enlightenment to utility promoters and our intellectual development to executive secretaries, that keeps even our liberals from seeing an impertinence in the very title of the "American League for India's Freedom." Such a moratorium sounds wholly unprecedented. But it isn't. Our excellences, as well as our defects, have been cheerfully admitted abroad for years. It is only with the crisis and its exposure of our impenetrable orthodoxy in the face of new facts that our supremacy as a financial and commercial nation has been questioned. Nobody asks us to give up the conviction that we are the greatest nation on earth. Given a modicum of French reason and British realism and we jolly well would be.

As I confer with friends, mostly upon current afflictions, it seems impossible to exaggerate the benefits to be realized from the habit of relentless self-diagnosis—or the dangers from want of it. Suppose our business and financial leaders, instead of assuring themselves fatuously that prosperity is just around the corner and, even if it isn't, that the depression is all Europe's fault—suppose that our leaders had possessed the intelligence and relentless frankness which produced for Britain the MacMillan Committee's Report on Finance and Industry. What difference would it make? For one thing, the spirit which made it possible is today keeping England in the game with a handful of deuces and treys while we—largely because we have never troubled to learn a system for counting the tricks—are talking about throwing down a hand composed of aces and kings. We have the energy to "do something," but we lack the patience,

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frankness and fearless curiosity to discover what to do. England is able to proceed with her drastic war-debt conversion while we still play along with the fantastic idea that the way to relieve the victims of overwhelming debt is to lend them more money and wait supinely for the receiverships. Even the victims and the discontented, instead of occupying themselves with Marx and Lenin in an orderly fashion, dissipate their energies with senseless encampments around Washington, picket lines against hogs and corn meal and by inscribing ungrammatical dissent on public buildings.

Nevertheless, the returned exile does detect private and casual indications of cracks in the wall, among which are noted:

Tendency, with Ottawa's demonstration of the absurdity of barring American goods from the British Empire, to suspect that Messrs. Smoot and Hawley may not be the hot-cha economists as advertised.

Faint whisperings, as banks pop and "For Sale" adorns the most desirable suburban residences, that war debts and reparations might be dispensed with. (Ten years behind slow-poke Britain on this, already.)

Gradual admission, as bonus marchers and picketers multiply, that speeches and parades of the unemployed in Glasgow, Newcastle and Hyde Park may not necessarily mark the end of the British Empire. (And where was Invergordon?)

Popularity of Walter Lippmann, Sir Arthur Salter and Stuart Chase in circles formerly more responsive to Foster and Catchings, Charlie Schwab and Arthur Brisbane.

"Of Thee I Sing."

Obvious reversal of sentiment on prohibition—though the reversal is typically disguised by the bogus insistence that we are repealing the Eighteenth Amendment "for prosperity" instead of for several more respectable reasons.

The increasingly heard mention of "economic planning" by people who, three years ago, would have met the phrase with a lightning, "Why don't you go back where you came from?"

A perceptible suspicion that it might have been wiser, instead of driving the radical movement underground by means of anti-syndicalist laws and *agents provocateurs,* to let it grow into an organization like the British Labor party whose leaders become Peers in a crisis—an organization which, if the underpinning should give way, would make a safer landing place than the inchoate and anarchistic aggregation of bonus marchers, milk strikers, mobsters and panhandlers which constitutes the present alternative to a so-called major party.

Am I glad to get back? Certainly. Of course I miss the dim little street on the wrong side of Kensington, with the cheery pub gleaming like a beacon through the fog. I become nostalgic when I think of an old house in Somerset, London bus conductors, the cheerful imbecilities of The Daily Express, sea food at Scott's, a certain barrister's chambers in Lincoln's Inn, Cream of Bristol sherry, taxis lined up beside the train at Waterloo, Paddington, Euston or King's Cross (in contrast to the exhausting labors in the catacombs of the Grand Central before one emerges at a place where taxis are expected), the Ivy restaurant, judges with wigs, open fires in bedrooms, "cold" Englishmen in railway carriages who start no conversations but carry on delightfully if you do, football on Hampstead Heath and, believe it or not, English 1/9 cigars.

But I like succotash better than brussels sprouts, American football better than rugger, central heating better than gas fires, American plumbing better than geezers, baseball better than cricket (except for the crowds) and chocolate pudding better than plum tart. If I miss the "full dress debates" at the House of Commons, I am at least seldom compelled to attend the House of Representatives; and if the countryside lacks the trim order and "cuteness" of English country, it is only remotely possible that one's day will be spoiled by the sight of a pack of hounds munching an exhausted fox beside a hedgerow. The times have turned American social conversation away from the statistical recitations of Dow, Jones averages which afflicted one before I went away and, although elaboration upon poverty is perhaps but a moderate improvement over an inventory of riches, it at least conforms more nearly to the Franciscan standard. I miss Englishmen who say, "What a filthy country this is, I imagine we'll all be eating grass by this time next year, well, cheerio mates," and then trot off to pay enormous incomes taxes and sell off a sound hunter; but we may accomplish our own sort of urbanity if a premature boom does not again nourish that natural but immature preference for adulation over analysis which puts a people in the sad condition which Lord Chesterfield ascribed to kings—of whom he wrote that "flattery cannot be too strong for them; drunk with it from their infancy, like old drinkers, they require drams."

Well, he would indeed be a poor patriot who would encourage a craving of that sort and, if anybody knows an antidote for flattery, he should administer it promptly, lest Uncle Sam go into a long decline, meanwhile taking hypodermic injections of slogans, bogus optimism and self-congratulation for want of the resolution to consult the X-ray men. There is some response to treatment already and it may be that within a generation it will be possible to enjoy in our best clubs conversations about America as frank, skeptical and vigorously critical as it is now possible for even an American outcast to encounter in any pub in Fleet Street or, for that matter, the City. In a couple of hundred years there may be an American banker able, like Montagu Norman, to discuss without cracking an artery the possibility of the capitalist system's ending. And in three hundred years we may see university professors permitted

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to advance the less risky notions of Mr. Keynes without being beaten by the police.

Overoptimistic? Perhaps. But if man be denied hope, he is in almost as deplorable a state as if compelled to subsist on community singing and the frustrated fatuity of speculative cheer leaders. Being a long-range optimist, I cannot altogether give up the feeling that Americans, who have so many qualities which the English lack and so much bigger a back yard to try them out in, will not allow themselves permanently to be outdone by a people who exercise their sentimentality upon fox hunting, duchesses, Lord Mayor's processions and Christmas pantomimes, and let business be business. Being observant, we may eventually see the advantage of doing the same. FREDERIC NELSON.

Russia Revisited

III: *The Balance Sheet of the Five Year Plan*

THE GAME most popular in Moscow just now, especially among the members of the foreign colony, is to guess to what extent the Five Year Plan will actually be completed within four years. The game, however, is not entirely confined to Moscow and to the small circle of foreigners there. Everywhere this question is discussed with the greatest eagerness and with a considerable diversity of opinion. Some declare, without much hesitation, that the Plan is a complete failure; others feel bound to admit in a grudging way that the Plan may, after all, be a sort of fifty-fifty success. Some base their conclusions on prejudice; others found theirs on elaborate calculations, comparing the figures relating to the production of iron, coal and ore with the original estimates of the Plan and the annual "control figures." In this way they believe that they have obtained data which will enable them to produce a balance sheet of the Plan and to judge of the success or failure of the experiment.

On the face of things, this method seems to be correct. If the Plan were merely a collection of concrete schemes it would be easy to estimate the degree of its success; and this would be the method of ascertaining it. But the indices of the Plan, the great works to be undertaken under it and the various programs of production which it contemplates, are only the skeleton of the scheme. And while a balance sheet of the output of iron, coal, oil, flax and cotton can be made out and is indeed necessary, I maintain that anything like a balance sheet of the Five Year Plan must evade calculation.

I don't, of course, wish to minimize the importance of calculations, and have not the slightest desire to transfer discussion of the Plan from the "realistic" to the "metaphysical" plane. But I am convinced that the Piatiletka might be a failure even if its indices of production were fulfilled one hundred percent, and might equally prove a success if these indices were only half-fulfilled. In fact, the essential characteristics of the experiment have little at all to do with any mere concrete program of works. They are concerned with the realization of five main ambitions:

1. The transformation of Russia from a predominantly agrarian to an "agro-industrial" state.
2. The mechanization and collectivization of agriculture.
3. The creation of heavy and engineering industries as a basis for the industrialization of the country.
4. The foundation of economic activities not on a purely acquisitive basis.
5. The mass education of millions of unskilled workers in the management of machines.

These aims cannot, of course, be isolated from the indices of production, but their success is not to be gauged by a discovery of how far these indices have been fulfilled. It is as well to remind the reader that the first thrills that signalized the success of the experiment had nothing in common with any mere quantitative progress. They were the expression of a very natural gratification at the manifestation of something like a new spirit among the agricultural and industrial workers.

A candid examination of the operation of the Five Year Plan raises automatically the question whether planning has or has not justified expectations, the question, that is to say, whether the present Russian economy has any right to be called planned economy.

Here the criterion is simple. A system of planned economy is one in which the discrepancy between the plan as fulfilled and the estimate is not so big as to destroy the main aim of the system. If one applies this criterion to the working of the Piatiletka, one finds good reason for doubting whether planning has really succeeded in subduing the elemental forces. The discrepancies between the plan and its fulfilment are quite numerous. Some record an increase, some a decrease, on the provisions of the Plan. For instance, productivity of labor, or the reduction of the cost of production, fall below the estimates; while the amount of investment of capital and of the employment of labor exceed them.

These discrepancies, however, should not be overstressed. In the first place, they can easily be explained by the novelty of the method and by the inexperience of the planners—and also by the fact

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that the first Plan, when formulated, could not conceivably involve all the factors of national economy. It is confidently believed that the second plan will be more scientifically based and will better be able to foresee and to provide for the tendencies of development.

But while these "minor oversights" can be more or less satisfactorily explained, there remains one discrepancy which belongs to quite a different category. I refer to the discrepancy between the agricultural provisions of the Plan and the actual development of agriculture. I must remind the reader that the agricultural section of the Plan, the provision for the mechanization and the collectivization of agriculture, was no mere appendix to it, but was one of its main planks. Therefore a marked lack of harmony between provision and execution is a serious matter which cannot be explained away. Here are the facts:

The Plan provided, and that in its "maximum variant," for a collectivization of 20 percent of the sown acres in the last year of the Piatiletka. The provision for the first two years was below 10 percent. What then actually happened? From the very start, collectivization assumed proportions which had no relation whatever to these provisions. The provisions for the first two years were more than satisfied in the first few months, and before the year was over the entire agricultural program of the Plan was overfulfilled 300 percent. On the merely formal side this result, whether satisfactory or unsatisfactory in itself, constituted of course a heavy indictment of the Piatiletka as a plan. It demonstrated that in at least this section it was no longer a case of planned control but of elemental forces let loose. But the situation was infinitely more serious than was at first suspected; for the breakdown of the agricultural section upset the whole balance of the Plan. The new agricultural position called for an immediate readjustment of almost all sections of the Plan, from the financial and metallurgical to the food and labor provisions.

And yet it is exactly here that the enormously steadying effect of planned control received its full confirmation and justification. What had happened in agriculture was a most far-reaching revolution, and planning had not only to face an ordinary readjustment of economic forces but to withstand a tremendous upheaval. The shock which the country received from this upheaval and the dislocation of economic forces which it involved were so serious that they cannot be said to have been entirely overcome to this day. But the surprising circumstance of the case was not so much the enormous impact of the shock but the successful resistance to it, a resistance chiefly due to the influence of planning.

The reshaping which the Plan had to undergo owing to the agrarian revolution was a serious business indeed, and it has doubtless been responsible for no small portion of the hardships from which Russia has suffered in the last three years. I myself am convinced that the failure to fulfill the metallurgical and "energetic" sections of the Plan in four years is directly due to the paramount necessity of satisfying the abnormal demands of agriculture. I am, however, equally sure that this retardation is quite incommensurable with the advantages derived from a planned control of the last phase of the Russian agrarian revolution—itself probably the greatest event in modern history.

A system of planned economy and of planned economy on a socialist basis is so foreign to our consciousness and so contradictory to our experience that it is difficult for us to take it quite seriously—and this despite the fact that during the last four years innumerable testimonies have been paid to the enormous changes which such a system has produced in Russia in an incredibly short time. The difficulty of realizing what is going on there today is accentuated by the fact that the tendency of development has been almost entirely internal. Had Russian reconstruction proceeded on normal or traditional lines, had the country, that is to say, developed her natural resources in the interests of an export trade, even an infinitely smaller national effort would have received worldwide recognition. As circumstances stand then, it is not easy to convey in plain language to the reader a clear and adequate notion of the complete transformation which Russia has recently undergone in every section of national life. Everywhere one discovers that inert and dormant forces have been released and that century-old relations have been uprooted and transformed in a few years.

Take the relations between industry and agriculture. Up to the outbreak of the revolution, the predominance of the latter was so great in Russia that the country was generally regarded as an agrarian state. The revolution, by the blow it dealt at capitalism and by the destruction of plant and machinery it involved, accentuated the predominance. Russia became an ocean of villages, with an urban population reduced from 22,000,000 in 1914 to 16,000,000 in 1920. When the Bolsheviks proclaimed as their immediate policy the transformation of these relations in favor of industry, the idea was simply regarded as a bad joke. But today one is bound to admit that the Bolsheviks not only defined their own determination correctly but that they accurately foresaw the trend of economic forces. They can now indeed claim that the basic and fundamental aim of the Five Year Plan, the conversion of the country into an agro-industrial state, is a palpable reality. In 1931 nearly 60 percent of the national income was derived from industry and only 40 percent from agriculture.

This far-reaching change is not the result of some accidental or temporary factor, but arises from a normal course of national development. It is too marked and outstanding a feature to be explained by a possible decline of agricultural pro-

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duction or values. As a matter of fact, agricultural production is now only relatively backward in Russia; it is up to and beyond the pre-war level. Moreover, this tendency to industrial predominance is illustrated by other phenomena, such as the increase in population of the old towns, the springing up of new ones and a marked change in the social character of the urban population.

It is necessary to realize that this growth of population in all towns possesses a special significance, representing as it does almost exclusively an increase in the number of workers. Roughly speaking, two million new urban workers are entering productive life every year, which, coupled with the increasing mechanization of agriculture, goes to prove that the industrialization policy of the Soviet government has struck deep and far-spread roots in the country.

When I was in Moscow this year I was impressed by the fact that both the authors and the organizers of the Plan make quite candid confession of the fact that many of its vital indices are still awaiting fulfilment. They admit that the program, fulfilled for iron production, for railway transport and for some other key industries, falls below the estimates for the final year of the Plan. They further agree that the quality of output has improved but slightly, that productivity of labor has not reached expectations and that the cost has been reduced considerably less than was provided for. In fact, the Russian general and technical press is full of complaints and criticisms on this score. Yet all these admissions and complaints fail to diminish the confidence of the Bolsheviks in the general success of the Plan. In fact, they openly confess that this success has surpassed their most sanguine hopes.

They claim success for the Plan mainly on three grounds. They maintain, first, that they have established in Russia a native machine-production industry and have thereby provided for the unhampered progress of industrialization. Second, that they have managed to recruit millions of young workers to the service of industry, thus supplying the machines with their due complement of man-power. Third, that they have carried through a collectivization of Russian agriculture and have so laid the foundations for the socialization of the country.

The progress made in engineering cannot be disputed, and the celebrations of it in the press and on the platform, glowing and exuberant as they are, cannot be called unwarranted. It must be remembered that in Russia a machine, whether for use in heavy or in light industry, was always instinctively regarded as a foreign product. Russia, of course, produced machines and tools, but only of the simplest kind. The backwardness of the country in this respect was tragically demonstrated during the Great War, when the manufacture of munitions was held up until lathes and other tools could be obtained from the Western Allies and from America. Today the Bolsheviks claim that even a complete blockade of Russia would have no more serious effect than that of slowing down the tempo of industrialization.

If the establishment in Russia of a machine-construction industry is something of a miracle, the transformation of the Russian peasant, whose natural pace is that of his oxen and whose only machine is a wooden plow, into an operator of high-speed machines is an enterprise which only optimists like the Bolsheviks would have ventured upon. As Marxists they believed that the new industrial environment creates the new mentality, and that is why they so confidentally entrust the new machines to a semi-skilled and often to an unskilled mass of workers. Commercial calculations have not been given weight in considering the great problem of how millions of unskilled men and women are to be trained for the manning of the new factories.

To understand the magnitude of the problem it is necessary to realize its threefold aspect. It involves, first, the conversion of unskilled into skilled workers; second, the introduction into the factories of mass-production methods; and third, the reconciliation of these methods with a new labor discipline, not morality, based not on acquisitiveness, but on a sense of common responsibility and common interest. Obviously a problem so complex and involving so many millions of human beings cannot be solved offhand. At this early stage all that can be said is that it is being attacked by bold and original methods which, though not immediately or generally effective, seem already to point the way to a solution.

As to the turning out of the new man power, it is claimed that in this respect the provisions of the Five Year Plan have been more than met. The number of workers now engaged in industry and the mechanized sections of agriculture far exceeds the estimates of the Plan. The authors expected that it would reduce unemployment, but they never anticipated that it would solve this problem in its third year and even occasion a shortage of labor. The solution of this problem is popularly regarded as one of the greatest triumphs of the Piatiletka. Obdurate critics of the Plan of course contend that this addition of millions of new workers to its personnel should be put down to its debit rather than to its credit side.

If this addition constituted a mere dilution of labor there would be ample justification for this view. But in the present stage of Russia's reconstruction, the absorption of these new cadres has nothing in common with dilution proper; it is a bold and sweeping attempt to obtain the mass training of industrial recruits. Two possible methods were available for dealing with this question of obtaining the supply of labor: the intensive training of a small industrial army or the extensive

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plan applied by the Bolsheviks. It is difficult to say which method is more efficient and which is cheaper. The fact remains, however, that in Russia today a system has been evolved which will enable millions of young men and young women to acquire the necessary industrial training.

While these millions are in the course of training, Russian industry has necessarily been manned by unskilled or semi-skilled workers. And this is bound to affect both efficiency and cost. But the Bolsheviks worry little about this alternative; they maintain that a price must be paid for mass training and they claim that the period of training need not be long.

To my mind the question of the success of the Plan is no longer in doubt. The only doubtful points, I take it, are whether it will be completed in four years or will take a few months longer, whether it will be more successful in some branches than others, and whether the financial and social costs of it will be more or less onerous.

If, however, I were inclined to be dogmatic, I should formulate my general criticisms of the operation of the Plan under three heads. I should declare that the Piatiletka is greatly overcapitalized, that it suffers from lack of coördination between the various sections, and that its steady progress is being retarded by the undisciplined impetuosity of its workers.

Overcapitalization in the U. S. S. R. means, of course, something radically different from overcapitalization in a capitalist country. The gravamen of my charge consists in this: that not all investments, especially those in the heavy industries, have been made with a view toward producing immediate results. This circumstance imposes a heavy burden on industry, a burden far more onerous because in this way capital has been diverted from immediately profitable channels. The factories and plants which have absorbed the largest investments are either not completed or only partially completed, so that the full return from them can only be obtained in the next few years.

Overcapitalization, then, which has proved so heavy a burden under the first Five Year Plan, may reasonably be expected to prove a blessing under the second. In fact, the productivity of the plant already paid for is expected to be much greater in the next few years than it is at present, and so will allow allocation of capital under the second Piatiletka to vary considerably from that under the first, without in any way retarding the development of the heavy and engineering industries. It is claimed, moreover, that this development will in the immediate future be much cheaper than it has been, since it will be mainly based on domestic production.

In all branches of human activity coördination is an all-essential element, but in planned economy it is the heart and soul of the business. I am ready enough to admit that even at present coördination enters largely into the Plan. But the instances of lack of coördination are numerous and glaring enough. And these are owing, not only to lack of experience, of foresight, of wisdom and of temper, but to the fact that coördination as applied to the reconstruction of a whole nation presupposes something like a new instinct. "Master the new technique!" they are shouting in Russia today. And they are hitting the nail on the head. But I doubt whether they are yet alive to the fact that the science and art of coördination is the most essential element of this new technique.

The retarding effect on progress in Russia caused by what I have called the undisciplined impetuosity of the workers could be illustrated by many instances. And this is only natural and indeed inevitable, for the native impetuosity of the Russian workers is accentuated by the hustling, slap-dash spirit of the times. The history of the construction of all the new factories, water dams and blast furnaces is full of romantic tales of the devotion, the audacity and the heroism displayed by the workers on the industrial front. To work overtime or to make a grueling effort is with them a matter of *esprit de corps,* part of the game.

It is, indeed, so prevalent that the task of the Soviet government now is not so much to stimulate this enthusiasm as to temper it, to economize it, to harness it. What the exuberance of the Russian workers needs is restraint and direction. It would be much more valuable were it inspired by that spirit of economical thoroughness which Lenin recommended when he urged: "Let us do a little bit less, and let us do it a little bit better!"

Moscow. MICHAEL FARBMAN.

In his concluding article, to be published next week, Mr. Farbman will discuss Russia's Second Five Year Plan.—THE EDITORS.

It Might Have Been Worse

IN THE noisy November night Elmer Durkin sat by his radio, invented, bought and paid for under wise Republican rule, and heard the Grand Old Party go down in hideous ruin and combustion. When the huge Roosevelt figures began to pile up in New York, Elmer lost his air of suspense and upon his simple, kindly face there was a look as of dreams come true.

"It's curtains for Hoover, Dink," he said to young Mr. Hubbell. "Without New York he hasn't got a Chinaman's chance to cop. Now for the gory details."

For twelve long years the newsdealer had awaited this hour while youth slipped away and the line of vegetation crept up his brow. Tonight he sat adding up delicious figures unconscious of the claims of commerce. Customers helped themselves to newspapers and tobacco and made their own change. Friends dropped in to share Elmer's hap-

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piness for a little while. Among them came that die-hard Republican, Lester Quigley of the Woppington Supply Company.

"They ought to have let him finish the job," said the sad bookkeeper. "He'd have done better the next time." Him Dink Hubbell demolished with simple arithmetic.

"That's out, Quig. If he was a bum President in four years, he'd been twice as bum in eight."

Presently John Wharton arrived to buy a paper of pipe tobacco and express the hope that President Roosevelt would do something for plumbing and heating. Lem Beale, a pre-Harding postmaster, entered the news store with a gleam of hope in each eye.

"Happy days," Lem said in part, "are here again."

At eleven came J. T. Riland, facing the situation with a gallant smile.

"We're licked to a frazzle," said the grizzled old editor, "but anyway we've saved Pennsylvania."

"That's right, J. T." Elmer grinned over his statistics. "Herbert comes out with the same old slogan, 'It might have been worse.' "

The publisher replied that he was going home to bed where honest people belonged. Nobody but riffraff, he held, would be in circulation from now on.

Shortly after midnight came Chester A. Donner, who had closed his drugstore after a brisk evening's trade and wanted to rest his feet.

"Listen, Chet," said the newsdealer, "this thing stacks up like the worst trimming the G.O.P. has taken since civilization wore rompers. Kansas and Iowa have gone haywire and Michigan is groggy. Now the coast is coming across with the same tune. It listens like our hero wouldn't draw anything west of Pittsburgh but a flock of geese eggs."

"It's kind of tough on Hoover, Elmer. He put up a hard fight toward the end."

"You're telling me! And without much help from the talent, at that. I thought the barnstorming act those cabineteers put on was pretty sour. Herbert pulled some rough stuff himself about F. D.'s personal rackets and how the American System would fold up if he gets the air and grass will grow in the asphalt if we let lousy foreigners trade with us. In those whistle stops he was ladling out local pork like a bush-league Congressman. Like four years ago he saved up his worst thoughts and sprung them on New York. He lined up the progressives of both parties and gave them the bum's rush. But all that runs for Sweeny now.

"They say Congress will be Democratic at both ends and soppity wet. The squawk box here is trying to make out that Moses, Watson, Bingham and Smoot have hit the skids with Hoover. The Old Guard didn't surrender, but they're not expected to live. If he's helped us lose that quartet, all will be forgiven."

Elmer here referred to his calculations.

"Maybe twenty million goofers slipped the oke on the Hyde Parker today. They've got all the engineering their system craves. They say every time Herby feels sorry for the unemployed he breaks down and lends a million smackers to a bank. Some of them want beer with their meals and some of them just want meals. They think the Old Potato knows the answer. I hope they are right, but there hasn't been enough evidence to convict."

"If so many folks believe he'll bring good times," said the druggist, "maybe it will happen."

Elmer was stricken with a cheery thought.

"Things have been breaking a little better lately. What if the depression peters out in a year or so? This baby can snag the credit for bringing back prosperity even if he doesn't do anything but change the cast of characters at the feed box."

FELIX RAY.

Washington Notes

Why Roosevelt Will Be Popular—The Friendly "Corps of Correspondents"—Upturn and Sales Tax—Cabinet Makers

AS ONE looks forward to the "new deal" with the Roosevelt regime, several things, it seems to me, argue for its popularity—at least for some time. These things are entirely apart from the statesmanship of the next President, of which no indications were given during the campaign and few are apparent in his record. Neither are they —except one—directly connected with any promises made by the successful candidate personally, or in the party platform upon which he ran. One big, basic reason, of course, is that he will begin in complete agreement with the great national desire to get rid of the Eighteenth Amendment, whereas the unfortunate Mr. Hoover kept his face stubbornly and stupidly set against that reform until he was increasingly disliked as the resentment grew and was deprived of all credit when he was finally driven to recognize it. At this time I do not want to dwell upon the difficulties which Mr. Roosevelt will have in redeeming that unqualified repeal pledge in the platform, though anyone who talks with Democratic Senators from the South and West knows of their reality. The bulk of these believe in banning the saloon by means of the Constitution, exactly as proposed by the Republicans—or I should say, they will vote that way.

Take the Virginia Senators for one example, and take McGill of Kansas for another The Honorable Carter Glass has already declared on the Senate floor that he will not be bound by the action of the "frenzied assemblage" at Chicago. As for Mr. McGill, he ran in Kansas on a state platform pledging him to uphold the Eighteenth Amendment. I fear there will be trouble in the redemption of that Democratic pledge—but it will not diminish the popularity of Mr. Roosevelt, who will be swimming with a popular tide instead of against it. No one really hates Mr. Roosevelt. He goes in with no violent enemies and no popular soreness either because of his campaign, which was without much flavor, or because of his program, which, except on prohibition, was on the whole vague.

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Probably the best asset he will have to start with is the attitude of the "corps of correspondents" here in Washington. Toward Mr. Hoover, about 435 of the 500 or so were personally embittered and hostile, while toward Mr. Roosevelt the vast bulk of them are almost effusively friendly. Partly, this is due to the fact that they are almost unanimously Wet and were therefore ardently in favor of the election of the wringing Wet candidates; partly, because of the intense personal hostility engendered among them toward Mr. Hoover; partly, to the skill with which Mr. Roosevelt handles them and partly, to the personal qualities for newspaper contact of the suave and ubiquitous Farley. For reasons which I could never understand, most newspaper correspondents here have always seemed to warm toward the high public official or politician who calls them by their first names. When Roosevelt and Farley have seen a newspaper man three or four times, his first name is very much easier to remember than his last. This may appear a trivial sort of thing; but if anyone doubts the advantage to an administration of having the good will of the Washington correspondents, all he has to do, it seems to me, is to look back upon the past four years and see what their ill will has cost.

I have reason to believe that the President-elect, and his right-hand political adviser, Mr. Farley, have a keen appreciation of these facts and an instinctive understanding of newspaper psychology. The newspaper fraternity at the Capitol after March 4, I think, will be treated with a tact and skill such as they have rarely seen before. They will be talked to "confidentially" from the start. The alert Mr. Farley some days ago said to a group of them, so I am told, "We've got you boys with us now and we're going to keep you with us." In fact, I am given to understand that this is to be one of the major administration policies with which nothing is to be permitted to interfere.

Another reason for believing in the early popularity of the Roosevelt regime is the general conviction that next spring will mark the beginning of a real recovery in business. Mr. Roosevelt, of course, will have had even less to do with the recovery if it develops than Mr. Hoover had to do with the depression—much less—but the credit for the come-back will as inevitably go to the one as the blame went to the other. It is generally agreed that we are in for an extremely hard winter, during which the suffering and distress will be greater than before, but many politicians, and some financiers, believe that things are set for recovery in the spring and that there is nothing on the horizon, here or in Europe, to retard it. It would be a great piece of Roosevelt and Democratic luck if the real upturn were to come soon after the party takes over the government entirely, just as it would be typical of the Hoover luck to have it come just five months too late to do him any good.

It may be that this encouraging prospect will not materialize, but it is certainly true that Big Business feels no apprehensions that the new administration will propose any policies which will frighten capital or prevent a return of confidence. On the contrary, Big Business, as I pointed out in this place some weeks ago, had adjusted itself to the Roosevelt election early in October and is more convinced now than it was then that the progressive leaders of the West, who were among his early supporters, will have slight influence upon fiscal policies. They believe that so far as the fundamental financial course of the Treasury is concerned, in no vital way will it be different from what it has been under Hoover. Big Business is primarily interested in two things. The first is blocking immediate payment of the bonus, and on that there seems ample ground for feeling safe. The other is in getting Mr. Roosevelt to favor the sales tax. On this, I am not certain, but I think it highly probable they will succeed. For one thing, it will be insistently demanded of him by William Randolph Hearst. For another, Roosevelt has little stomach for the sort of income and inheritance taxes the progressive Republicans of the Norris and La Follette school desire. For still another, the sales tax will be the easiest way to carry out his budget-balancing pledges and the method by which he can get warmer support in the metropolitan press.

The chief topic of press speculation for the next three months naturally will be the Roosevelt Cabinet. Gossip concerning it seems to center around a few names, most of them of men who figured as possible Democratic nominees either during the Chicago convention or before—Young, Baker, Smith, Ritchie, Traylor. It would seem natural for Mr. Roosevelt to want nearly all of these men in his Cabinet, and I have no doubt that some of them will be invited. There is already, however, talk here of opposition to Mr. Young as Secretary of State, or for any other Cabinet position. Mostly, this emanates from the progressive Republicans, who regard him as more completely typifying the Power Trust than any other individual in America, and will be deeply chagrined if Mr. Roosevelt takes him into his official family. I am by no means sure that Mr. Young could be induced to serve—his friends are emphatically of the belief that he could not—but I am quite certain that he could not be confirmed by the Senate without a very hot protest indeed. In regard to Mr. Baker, there is no whisper of opposition, but a very decided doubt is expressed by those who know him best as to his willingness to become Secretary of State. "Why should he?" they ask, and there is no adequate answer. The information we get here about Smith is that he much prefers to run for the Senate in 1934 than to take any Cabinet position under Roosevelt.

One man, I am told, whom Mr. Roosevelt personally wants to put in one of the minor Cabinet posts, though why is not explained, is Major "Jack" Cohen of The Atlanta Journal—recognition of the South, and a reward to an early Roosevelt man, I suppose. At any rate, the inside circle is taking the Cohen selection for granted. However, this Cabinet speculation is pretty premature and will get pretty tiresome before March 4. No President, if he is wise, announces his Cabinet until a few days before his inauguration. There are too many things which may crop up to make a man unavailable at the last minute. The sensible politics is to keep the slate open until after March 1, and I presume this is the plan the Roosevelt group will follow. Therefore I think there is reason for considering any Cabinet forecast without real foundation at this time, except perhaps as relates to the next Postmaster General. All the prophets agree that he will be James A. Farley, the best first-name caller developed in this country in a long time.

Washington. T. R. B.

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Not on the Ticker Tape

Securities and Jeopardies—Curbing the Ballyhoo—Cash in the Stocking—Housing and the R. F. C.—Roosevelt's Cabinet

THE LOOSE and often misleading nomenclature prevalent in the investment world was largely responsible for creating that frame of mind which left the lay investor wholly unprepared for the collapse of values which has occurred in the last three years. Speculative financiers, cloaked in a false dignity, masqueraded before the uninitiated as safe and sound operators. Newspaper advertisements, restrained even to the point of dullness, implied a sense of security that was more apparent than real.

Frank A. Vanderlip, retired president of the National City Bank of New York, suggests some important changes in the financial vocabulary. "No longer is it an apt metaphor to say that anything is 'as safe as a bank,'" Mr. Vanderlip points out. "The word 'securities' has almost become obsolete. An investment that drops in price to a tenth or perhaps even a twentieth of its former range is not a security; it is a jeopardy. The page of stock and bond quotations might well be headed 'Quotations of Risks and Hazards.' To call them securities in the light of their fluctuations is ironical."

Mr. Vanderlip's observation is especially significant when it is considered in connection with the attitude of investment bankers toward the newspapers. Whenever the issuing house began grinding out new offerings they usually launched into a widespread propaganda or ballyhoo. They resented any independent criticism by the press, and never hesitated to use advertising as a weapon to gag criticism. The Curtis magazines alone put a general ban on financial advertising, yet, through honest conviction perhaps, they went as far as any in nourishing the illusion that most securities issued by responsible Wall Street banking houses were secure.

In the light of the disparity between promise and performance on the part of banking houses, it is essential that responsible social supervision be placed on new issues. I am not advising more blue-sky legislation, which is aimed at crooks, but something akin to the wartime Capital Issues Committee, which kept a check on the attempts of the respectable to dip into the capital market. If such a public committee accomplished no more than standardizing financial vocabulary and insisting that speculative risks be so described, it would perform a useful purpose.

Under existing conditions, safety of principal has been achieved through the prolonged depression only by speculative methods. It is said in Wall Street, for example, that the brilliant Clarence Dillon, after the first smash in October, 1929, told his firm to "sell everything." Some of his associates thought the advice too drastic and at least one threatened to withdraw. But such a course of retiring from investment averted the punishment meted out to those who continued to have faith.

Another investment banker sold out sufficient holdings to have $6,000,000 in cash at the time the storm broke. His cash greatly exceeded his bank loans, which were trivial compared to the net worth of his equities. But he vitiated his fortune and his financial position by underestimating the length of the depression. He got himself frozen up tight by investing his cash more than a year and a half ago in a transportation venture.

Another variant of this theme was touched on the other day by one of the ablest financiers in the United States, who is respected both in Wall Street and in Washington. "In my forty years of business experience," he told me, "I had always found it safe for a man to borrow as little as 10 percent against his net worth, yet in the last year and a half not a few who have been as conservative as this have been wiped out. It has been ruinous to be in debt through this period."

In explaining the light demand for bonds, he said further: "Men of wealth have been using surplus income to get out of debt, and also to offset losses. When such liquidation is complete, they will again seek outlets for surplus funds."

Wall Street was fully prepared for a Democratic victory at the polls, and is now disposed to stress Mr. Roosevelt's fundamental conservatism. It has been suggested that, if the Governor wants to offset any belief that the Democrats are dangerous Reds, he might name the Democratic Jackson E. Reynolds, president of the First National Bank, the very citadel of the old order, as Secretary of the Treasury. A lawyer by profession and a former instructor in the law, Mr. Reynolds is widely recognized as a banker of honesty and ability. He was a freshman at Stanford when Hoover was a sophomore.

It is said that the elder George F. Baker offered Mr. Reynolds a vice-presidency in the bank as an alternative to paying him high legal fees. On the first day he sat at his desk in the bank, Mr. Reynolds naïvely asked what he was supposed to do as a banker. The elder Baker, summing up his financial education, replied: "Just don't do anything unreasonable." Following this advice, Mr. Reynolds became president of the bank within six years.

Through the years, the First National has done well for its stockholders, but it has not taken them into its confidence. The security subsidiary ordinarily issues no statement, and accordingly the stock of the bank, which controls the affiliate, is necessarily something of a cat in the bag. An inquiring young stockholder once called upon an executive of the bank to ask for more complete information. The officer, pointing across the Street to the skyscraper constructed by the Irving Trust Company, said: "If you want to see what you're getting, buy the stock of that bank."

Wall Street bankers, with the best sources of information in Washington, tell me that the lame-duck Congress which meets next month will devote itself mainly to appropriations. It may also legalize beer and consider some variant of the sales tax, but it is not expected to touch upon bank-reform legislation.

L. M. N.

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American Don Quixote

Carry Nation, by Frank McGrath. Biltmore Theatre, October 29, 1932.

KNOWING the United States is very difficult; nobody at all intelligent claims to do so. With so many sections, localities and towns of varying traits and differing origins, it is hard for one section, even, to know another section; it could be said, I think, that it is even harder to know America from New York. The effect we have here in New York of information, of exhibitions where the world is rapidly shown and as readily understood, of being a center, a quintessence of the whole country, of a sort of bureau of national acquaintance, is really an obstacle toward knowledge of the rest of America. Just what a New Yorker is, beyond somebody who, with permanent intentions, has his latchkey in New York, is not now the question—which is the plain difficulty of knowing much about our country beyond one's personal beginnings, or acquired statistics, or chance meetings with provincials on boats to Europe. What, then, are we to expect the theatre, always typifying everything, and everywhere always more or less behind the best brains as brains, to know of America?

We need not linger here on the point. Obviously we have the New England Yankee, the Jew, the Irishman, the Southern colonel, the cowboy, the chorus-girl, the bootlegger and so on, with what degree of truth one may decide for oneself. They are high-lighted—which in a special sense is proper to the theatre—they are given stage hues, headlined, and are stereotyped so soon as their stage and box-office value is demonstrated. The theatre, by its very nature, decides what its types—in this case its folk masks—are to be. And the choice itself, depending on the audiences, is to some extent expressive of the country. It is, however, of late much less expressive because of its being arranged mostly for Broadway and not for road consumption. In the course of Broadway all has grown more wisecracking, empty, fast and engineered than it once was. When it does happen that plays depicting sections of our country are put on, the cast of actors assigned to the roles, plus the insistence on familiar and sure-fire stage themes, distorts most of what might be a glimpse of truth, truth outside stage truth. We turn, then, to the revues and musical comedies, the let-her-rip occasions with music and dancing and sometimes girls glorified in our society of cereal passions. Such creations are what our theatre does best. Not only do we ourselves know this; foreigners are exhilarated by these entertainments, acclaiming them as truly American; they sense the expertness; revel in the lavishness, which costs them nothing (often not even the ticket); feel no responsibility for, and bask in, the traces of vulgarity; and are impressed by the genuine combination of skill, vim, beauty, patent smartness, hardness, crudity and quick wits that we display.

In our serious drama we have a parallel case. There has developed a formula for what is American. It consists of diverse things: night club or Park Avenue or both; girls in dresses from well advertised smart shops; Broadway idea of an aristocrat; competent directing and accessories; hate-my-mother modern youth; cocktails; bucking wives, vague artists and business men; emotional climaxes like headlines, et cetera, et cetera, everything with its tabloid depth and an odd assumption of adolescent sophistication. All of which is largely a mockery, and is a part of the out-of-town boredom with Broadway. Basically, though it makes no pretensions in these larger matters, "Carry Nation" is the most American play that we have had in a long time, as well as being by all odds the most important event so far in the theatre this season. Where a play like "Dinner at Eight," for example, fairly smart and somewhat vulgar, keeps the theatre going, as a well put on night club keeps going the restaurant business, a play like "Carry Nation" carries onward the theatre's content and taxes its capacity, which is as it should be.

Mr. McGrath follows the facts pretty closely. We have Carry's father a fanatic, the mother insane; her first marriage, passionately in love but hated by her husband, who goes from drink to suicide, leaving her with a daughter; her school teaching and second marriage; worthless, sonorous and asexual Mr. Nation, with a laborious, headstrong wife; the first temperance impulses, garnished with saloon smashing; the extension of her smashing field; her husband's divorce of her, her disciples, her imprisonments, her fame, her daughter's insanity, her glorification and assailants; her last scene, speaking, without the teeth that she has lost that afternoon at a fray, in Waterville, Tennessee; the tombstone lighted in front of the curtain—"She hath done what she could." The episodic form is needed for such material; and Mr. McGrath, working from newspaper accounts and Carry Nation's own autobiography, has arrived on the whole at excellent results. His main shortcoming is too great a reliance on telling when we need to see what happens, something too much of the reportorial where we need the theatrical. The play would greatly profit at three points by rewriting. The reporter, the only strain of the outside and more illumined, or sophisticated, world that comes into the scenes, could not only be better acted but could be given lines that would serve as a comment on the situation and its many meanings. The scene with the drunken husband should count enough to give us a conviction of his suicide and his wife's thwarted love. The scene in front of the saloon, about to be invaded, should give us an impression less effective, pictorially, and more biting, realistically, of the misery mingled with the hilarity that this woman-set out to destroy; for obviously, as anybody should know, the situation close at hand that stirred her rage was not a charmed Tony's of a place, but grimy streets, Saturday saloon drunks, beaten wives, fouled children; Carry Nation did not rise out of a backwoods to check the dionysia of the rich, and her fanaticism all the way from tobacco to rum and the Bible did not start with theory.

Of the company around the central character, Mr. Leslie Adams' David Nation was a fine performance, smooth, witty and admirably simplified. As Mrs. Noble, the trembling satellite of her more fiery leader—a beautiful motif among Mr. McGrath's *dramatis personae*—Miss Mildred Natwick played beautifully, a delicate *grotesco*, not without her own poetry. Mr. Beckhard's casting throughout, the state of acting being what it is, was admirable.

The production of "Carry Nation," staged by Miss Blanche Yurka and under Mr. Beckhard's hands, is singularly fresh and devoted. In some of the acting there was

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too much of an amateur effect, less easily forgiven by the theatre than the emptiest professionalism. On the other hand there was in much of the playing just enough preserved of what might be called the amateurish to achieve a quality very valuable to the theatre. It was carried out also in the costumes, which were accurate, comic, touching, all at the same time, like an old song, but never laughable or mocked. At its best the impression in "Carry Nation" conveys a slight stylization, greatly to be desired in our theatre, a kind of musical impress of something that is neither too merely fact nor too plainly fancy. From this ensues a kind of ballad quality, difficult and rare.

The American element in this play of "Carry Nation," with which Mr. Beckhard has followed his successful "Another Language," spreads and grows in your mind with afterthought. If Carry Nation had come out of a peasant world she would have been a people's saint, like Joan of Arc, if out of an aristocratic world, a great revolutionary, crusader, shining dreamer. But she came out of an American bourgeois life, and has thus the harsh illogic of goodness, naïve egotism, ugliness, the natural lawlessness (in both her and the world she moves in), the purely personal approach of I like and I don't like, the simple solution of universal mysteries, the enthusiasm, the thwarted impulses, starved mind, the instinct of publicity and, not least, a moral sense that is largely negative—thou shalt not. Her piety, prohibition, energy and simplicity are American.

This realism of our popular quality, the good humor of the heart, the old narrow piety not yet broadened into committee meetings, are comprised mostly in Carry Nation herself. With no play around her—if you could imagine that—the character remains one of the most varied and spacious in the American theatre. It is headlong, talking with God, blurting out the relief of its private animosities, vituperative, egocentric, prohibitive, mystical and violent. The inner propulsion increases with physical exhaustion and age. And since the lines the character speaks are blessed with Carry Nation's own idiom, well worn catchwords and remarks, they have pith and life where most of our prose drama in this regard only grows thinner and thinner. In most stage writing the erosive tendency of platitude and trade repetition wears away even what might remind you that speech is still alive. Miss Esther Dale, as Carry Nation, gives an extraordinary performance, with a real technical attack and a fine sense of pitch for use in the sudden varieties of almost every speech. She creates the role with the spiritual and almost brutal comprehension and admission that are necessary. She sustains the full sum of it that makes the character lovable. Her last scene is one of the most beautiful and solitary, as well as daring and adept, that I have seen in the theatre.

It is said that there are people who have taken this play to be a defense of prohibition, or an attack on anti-prohibition. Such a silly inference is one of those things that might well make workers in the theatre hopeless with despair. The immediacy just now of the issue may put some underscoring to Carry Nation's ballad that in another epoch might be absent. But the same relation exists between prohibition and the character now created in this play as exists betwen feudal chivalry and Don Quixote. There is, of course, the bee in the bonnet, the cause, the stir, but none of that is the main thing. It would seem in the course of our human story that causes—rights, wrongs, debatable or not—set moving, or enter into, the current of life, in some man or woman of living capacity; the cause in itself, the incitement, falls away; it is the volume, the eternal fantasy, that counts for us, the charge of life. In this lies the secret of the scope, the verticality and bristling counterpoint, the distorted pathos and the grotesque, deep beauty that appear in this role of Carry Nation and that show up so our usual stage roles; just as in the play the healthy lack of any fear as to jostling contrasts, planes and qualities (as incongruous, violent and simple as our human nature in action) shows up the stale smear of dead consistency and expectedness in most of our plays. Our drama needs, above all things at present, texture.

STARK YOUNG.

CORRESPONDENCE

A Novelist Protests

SIR: A few days ago in Berlin, I came across a sprightly volume of essays by Americans in which they described the American scene. The volume contained an essay by a writer whose work I have greatly admired on many previous occasions —Mr. Clifton P. Fadiman. Mr. Fadiman's essay contained the following paragraph:

> We have two weeklies of liberal political tendencies, The Nation and The New Republic. They provide the only really penetrating literary evaluation we have.

It was by an extraordinary coincidence that on that same day I encountered an issue of your journal, published so long ago as May 11. Perhaps I might explain that I have been in Russia for some time and for that reason out of touch with occidental journals. The issue contained a review of my last novel, "Magnolia Street," by Miss Hazel Hawthorne.

I have never before, Sir, written to an editor in comment upon either blame or praise of my work, but in this Fadiman-Hawthorne juxtaposition, there is an element of fantasy which impels me to this irreticence, and I trust you will forgive it.

Miss Hawthorne is kind enough to quote a passage which almost concludes, but only almost concludes, the last chapter of my novel:

> "It looks like the dawn of a brighter day, when all races and peoples will go hand in hand together along the road of universal love and the crowds on both sides of the road will throw flowers at them.
>
> "But [the painter goes on] it stumps me. . . . If all the races and peoples are walking hand in hand along the Great West Road, where are the crowds to come from who are going to throw all those flowers?"
>
> Then suddenly . . . they got up from their chairs, and thrust their hands into the great bowl of scarlet roses on the table before them. . . . *"We'll* throw the flowers: *We'll* throw the flowers!" Their cheeks flamed scarlet like the hurtling roses.

Miss Hawthorne then continues:

> Does Louis Golding mean that the intelligentsia, including the artists, will be offside, solving in a great burst of emotion the problem of racial assimilation? Does he mean that? At any rate, significant or not, this selection gives, three-in-one, the flavor, the color and the message of "Magnolia Street."

May I submit to you, Sir, that that comment is about as disingenuous a performance as you have published in a journal, which—with one other—"provides the only really penetrating literary evaluation we have"?

It is disingenuous because by snapping off the quotation at that point she makes it sentimental or meaningless. My context continues:

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> From all Magnolia Street not a sound rose. Magnolia Street was turned to stone.
>
> "We'll throw the flowers!" cried Enid Cooper and Max Emmanuel. Then they stopped. Their hands fell. They stared steadily and somewhat somberly into each other's eyes.

I trust you will permit me to extract a few words from a review of "Magnolia Street," by James Agate in an English journal, who quotes this very passage, but quotes the whole of it.

> Now this book of 600 pages [says Mr. Agate] might have stopped 200 pages earlier, or gone on for another 200 pages, since its scope is elastic and illimitable, and we are therefore entitled to attach maximum significance to the point at which Mr. Golding desists and to the matter with which he desists, for Mr. Golding is a careful and deliberate artist who does nothing without extreme calculation.
>
> Now why do Max and Enid look somberly into each other's eyes? It is because Magnolia Street is turned into stone. And why is Magnolia Street petrified? It is because the Street realizes that never along any highway on this earth can the two races walk hand in hand.

I do not endorse Mr. Agate's conclusion, for I am no politician. I am merely a novelist. But I think you and Miss Hawthorne can hardly fail to find the passage from Mr. Agate's review pertinent.

London. LOUIS GOLDING.

The Libby Holman Case

SIR: Because Smith Reynolds, son of R. J. Reynolds of Winston-Salem, and my daughter's late husband, met a violent death after a "party" at his home where he was celebrating the twenty-first birthday anniversary of one of his friends, you libeled him, his family, their forbears and their families in as scurrilous an article—"The Libby Holman Case" [The New Republic, November 2]—as ever has been circulated by a reputedly decent publication.

But Hamlet, Lear, the Macbeths, Desdemona, countless others of the *haut ton* in and out of fiction, met violent deaths without indecently prompting Shakespeare and other commentators to villify their several families. Chatterton destroyed himself, Marlowe and Villon were violently slain, all of the aristocracy of letters. Rome, France, England, reeked with corruption among the well born at various stages of their history and long before the birth of the industrial era; yet, because a modern youth, married to a stage celebrity—whether deservedly or not is of no moment—the inheritor of millions acquired by his father in an industrial age, meets a violent death, ostensibly from the physical facts in evidence, at his own hand, you deduce without knowing them that his forbears, their families and his own are "poor whites" (in its opprobrious connotation), "barbarians, illiterate, lacking in gentility and ignorant"; and that, springing from such stock, suddenly becoming "plutocrats," necessarily illiterate, Smith Reynolds' end in the way it came was foredoomed.

What a travesty on the truth, on decency and sequentially on justice, indulged by a publication pretendedly serving a constituency looking to it for guidance in matters affecting the proper solution of questions evoked by a complex social organization. One of that constituency ever since your first issue, subscriber is horrified and grieved that your organ so prostitutes itself to propaganda worthy of the Police Gazette, of infamous memory and kindred publications of this day.

Subscriber knows decedent's family and its connections on paternal and maternal sides, and knows them to be modest, unassuming, unpretentious, home loving, literate, refined in the highest social sense and possessed of the social graces that characterize ladies and gentlemen and the really cultured, everywhere.

Your author—Sheean—patently manufactures the facts to fit his thesis, and you libelously circulate them to support your favorite doctrine as to how our economic life shall be conducted. Conceding that our industrial economy is awry; its reformation is not accelerated—quite the reverse must be seen to be true—by heartlessly and untruthfully libeling a family that a competitve industrial economy drew into its vortex. A knowledge of history—if you have it you purposely blinked it—would have taught you that violent deaths among the units of the social organization—and self-destruction usually occurs among the well born rather than among the lowly—is in no wise connected with the agricultural, pastoral or industrial economy prevailing. Virgil, Homer, Shakespeare, Keats, Burns, Gibbon, Herodotus, Catullus and what-not myriad others of like ilk will teach you that important fact. . . .

Cincinnati, Ohio. ALFRED HOLMAN.

[Mr. Holman has entirely misunderstood the purpose of Mr. Sheean in writing, and of The New Republic in publishing, the article. Neither the author nor the editors had any interest in proving any theories, or criticizing individuals, but simply in describing a social situation and the events it has helped to produce. —THE EDITORS.]

Killing the Housing Bill

SIR: A footnote to your editorial "Real Estate Men on Trial," in The New Republic of October 19.

Our limited-dividend housing corporation bill was one of those items which Republican leaders, along with Governor Pinchot, agreed would be passed. The Chamber of Commerce in Philadelphia, the Institute of Architects and all the social agencies in the state, the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor, were for the bill. Nevertheless, our baby was knifed in committee. Now we discover that the order to commit this murder was handed out by the principal real-estate-mortgage ring in Philadelphia and the speculative builders. Incidentally, the representatives of the operative builders insisted throughout the special session they were for the bill! Because of the formal agreement with the Governor, the killing had to be done privately.

Federal regulation must be substituted for state regulation if a city like Philadelphia is to be able to qualify for Reconstruction Finance Corporation loans. The R. F. C. now has at work an emergency staff to scrutinize plans which is probably far better equipped than anything that could be established in Pennsylvania (for the next ten years) unless the political temper of the Commonwealth alters radically. In each Federal Reserve District, a committee of prominent citizens has been appointed to work on the housing problem.

First of all, the R. F. C. should cut red tape; second, the law should be amended. It is quite unlikely that proper housing legislation can be enacted in many states for several years to come.

JOHN W. EDELMAN.

Philadelphia, Pa.

The Homeless Children of America

SIR: "Two hundred and fifty thousand young boys are on the road, homeless, in the United States, without sufficient clothing or food. They are the victims of the great unemployment." This is a quotation taken from an official report by the United States Department of Labor. What will happen to these boys and to the hundreds that are being added to this number by the industrial crisis which continues to plunge helpless youths into demoralization?

This question will be the subject of a symposium which will be held under the auspices of the John Reed Club in the New School for Social Research, 66 West Twelfth Street, on Sunday afternoon, November 20, at 3 p. m. Professor Scott Nearing, who has just returned from the Soviet Union, Doctor Frankwood E. Williams, author of "Adolescents: Studies in Mental Hygiene," published by Farrar and Rinehart and once Medical Director of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, and Moissaye J. Olgin, Ph.D., will discuss the future of "The Homeless American Youth." The Russian sound film, "The Road to Life," with a talkie preface by Professor Dewey, will be shown at the symposium.

Tickets are priced at seventy-five cents, and can be obtained at the Dauber and Pine Book Shop at 66 Fifth Avenue, or can be bought at the door on Sunday afternon.

New York City. OAKLEY JOHNSON.

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Children Like to Read—What?

IT IS exceedingly difficult for me to write a review of books for American children. In the first place, my own childhood was spent on a different planet. I can, with some effort, assume the outward proportions of a dutiful subject of the Great White Father. But my childhood, alas, is a closed volume, sealed with seven seals and never again to be opened, no matter how hard I may try.

In the second place, I am supposed to write for children myself, and it is a wise principle of the American realm of commerce that one should never under any circumstances say anything derogatory about any possible rivals. Now, as a matter of fact, I do not write for children in the stricter sense of the word. I write for grown-ups and sometimes my books find favor in the eyes of children. But the opinion is abroad that I am actively engaged in that particular trade and therefore I would feel very squeamish about saying of the efforts of one of my rivals, "This is a good piece of work and this is a bad one."

And, in the third place, with children's books one is always in a curiously difficult predicament. For while the books are supposedly being written for children, they are never bought by children. They are bought by their parents. And therefore, if I wanted to be quite fair, I would have to write my review for the parents. But in that case, while I might delight the honorable papas and mammas, I might get into all sorts of trouble with their offspring, who might well come unto me and say, "Are YOU responsible for that terrible thing they gave me for Christmas when I really wanted something entirely different?"

And so, rather than single out certain volumes for praise and certain others for blame, I shall on this occasion at least refrain from playing the agreeable role of literary Jehovah and devote myself entirely to a subject that is very close to my own heart and soul, the subject which one might sum up in the title of "How should children's books be written?"

The answer is a very simple one. Like all other good things in life, they should be born out of emotion. Whether that emotion be one of joy or despair is quite immaterial, provided there be an honest emotion. "Without emotion, no art," is one of the oldest of all divine laws and it holds as good on this dreary day in the year of Grace 1932 as it did tens of thousands of years ago when unknown painters scribbled their wild animals on the caves of France and Spain.

Now it so happens that we live in a world of sheer practicality. The gospel according to Saint Hubertus della Casa Bianca mentions many things that go toward the making of the Good Life, but alas, the Spirit receiveth scant attention. Already during the last fifty years we had lived in a world in which Inanimate Things had been steadily elevated to the rank of Major Deities. Woe unto him who dared to forget that "Blessed be those who accumulate Adequate Private Property" was the first and the greatest of all the modern Beatitudes, or who overlooked the fact that the smile of approbation of the Receiving Teller was infinitely more important than the grave nod of approval of some kindly Saint. But it remained for the present Apostle of the New Age of Prosperity to reduce all life to a blueprint and to express happiness in a graph.

Now the nursery is merely an appendix of the parental parlor. When boredom settled down upon the elders, what hope was there for the tiny tots?

None.

And those who want proof of this assertion should spend a day among the *"opera maxima et minima ad usum parvularum atque parvulorum"* now being turned out by the carload for the coming Yuletide.

In the first place they will find many highly useful little books of an informatory nature, volumes that explain the origin and growth of everyday objects around the house, others that show how the house was built, where the light comes from, where we ourselves came from, where our ancestors and their neighbors came from—most welcome signposts along the road to enlightenment and better allies in the warfare on stupidity (in the official sense of the word) than almost anything else I could possibly think of. And they will discover that the illustrations and the color work of practically all those books have been most enormously improved since the days of their own childhood.

For anyone interested in technical processes the Hoover era is a joy and delight. Furthermore the sentimental atrocities of former years are almost completely absent. But this is probably due to rebellion on the part of the children themselves. For although one can fool all of the children part of the time and part of the children all of the time, one cannot hope to fool all of the children all of the time and the hardy pioneers of the nursery have long since declared their independence of the Mother, Home and Heaven trinity.

I also have a sort of silent fear that patriotism of the older vintage is no longer active stock among the seven-year-olds. Even the ancient knights have disappeared. Their solid horses are no doubt being groomed for the forthcoming parade of Rooseveltian beer-wagons. They themselves are doing yeoman service among the Fascists and the Hitlerites. But they will come back in due course of time—they always do.

Generally speaking, therefore, the crop of this year's children's books is a good-looking one. And another fact worth recording with loud cheers and the waving of many flags—the modern artist has at last come into his, her or their own. Such pictures as those by Nura or the d'Aulaires are definite signs of hope—harbingers of a spring that has been late in coming.

But now I come to the second part of my little essay and I have to sound a somewhat different note. The reader will remember the text of my sermon, "No art without emotion." And alas, in only too many instances emotion is as sadly lacking in this particular field of literature as humor in a presidential speech.

One has the feeling that some bright and enterprising publisher has said to himself or his partners, "Here it is February and I have got my fiction and my non-fiction all nicely settled but I have not done a thing yet about my juveniles. Now let me see. There is so and so who last year had quite a good sale. Perhaps we can get her and then there is that woman who writes about Sweden or Czechoslovakia. Spain, just now, is attracting a good deal of attention. We will turn her loose on Spain and tell her to make it nice and folksy."

I do not positively say that all our children's books are written that way, but one begins to suspect that a good

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many of them had their source in the Valley of Hope and not on the Mountains of Enthusiasm. And the result is a product for which my native tongue had an excellent expression, "make work," something not born out of the spirit, but writ under the inspiration of a contract with a sliding scale of royalties.

I know that I am really writing an indictment of a very specific form of civilization—a civilization based upon commercial profit and the devil take the hindmost. And the system probably works to perfection in the shoe line and the paper-napkin line and the cafeteria line. But books, alas, are not merchandise and children's books (like children) most obstinately refuse to submit gracefully to the so-called laws of supply and demand.

Anyone who doubts the first half of this statement is politely requested to see what happened to the book business once it invaded the drugstore and the tobacco shop and began to display the works of Voltaire and Merejkovsky between pots of rouge, pills, cigarettes and shaving-soap. While those who think that I am in error when I proclaim the desirability of unworldly and uncommercial children's books are urged to spend some pleasant afternoon in a store that specializes in this sort of trade and then get at the honest opinion of the pleasant and intelligent women whose duty it is to sell the last crop of juveniles. He will then discover for himself what the matter is with this sort of literature, and if he is a person who makes a discreet and reliable impression he will be told in no uncertain terms and he will hear that no matter how excellent the technical perfection, the books just fail to be in any way distinguished because hardly one of them seems to have been written for the fun of it.

This year's crop brings us a curious example. Chris Morley has translated Wilhelm Busch's classic, "Max and Moritz," an excellent piece of work. But the publishers decided to provide the *böse Buben* with new pictures. The pictures in their way are above reproach. But compare the product of 1932 to that of the sixties, when Busch was scribbling his originals on the back of the Café Luitpold bill-of-fare in Munich! The new version is a good piece of drawing. The older version lives, dances, sparkles, tells you in every line that here a man was at work who simply had to tell you the adventures of these wicked infants or burst, who poured them out of the superabundance of his own *Lebenslust*, his own joy of life, and who wouldn't have cared a tinker's dam if the stuff had never even reached the point of publication at all.

But why go on? Those who have ears to hear will long since have understood what I am aiming at.

We are living in the midst of a revolution. Most people violently deny this assertion and prattle sweetly about former depressions and how very soon now the tide will turn and we will all be happy and prosperous once more. I am sorry, but as a historian it is my duty to warn these honest citizens that they are wrong and that this is the greatest and the most far-reaching and thoroughgoing social and economic upheaval the world has ever known. The old fairy stories are dead and the new ones have not yet gained a hearing. Curiously enough, it is the younger generation that seems to be most deeply aware of the great change that has come over the world. The youngsters flatly refuse to take an interest in mental pabulum that is so completely in discordance with their spiritual appetites and aspirations. They are polite about it. Children are incredibly polite and long suffering. They do not tear their books to pieces. They merely yawn and reach for one of those (in our eyes) monstrous comic strips that in some mysterious way seem to satisfy their needs.

It is up to us to recognize this fact. If we cannot understand and capture the spirit of the new age, then we had better not write any more children's books until the present occupants of the nursery are old enough to wield a pen and a brush for themselves. But if we realize that we are on the threshold of a new era, then we ought to be sufficiently honest with ourselves and our small customers to revaluate the old tales into terms that have some meaning for our rapidly changing clientele.

What we are doing today has little sense and practically no value. We are addressing the youngsters of 1932 in the language of Kate Greenaway. Children are proverbially conservative, but they draw the line somewhere. And it is up to us to discover that line or go out of business altogether.

HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON.

The books examined by Mr. Van Loon before writing this article were chiefly illustrated publications for younger children. Those selected by him as notably attractive are "Ola," a Swedish story, illustrated by Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire (Doubleday, Doran; $2) and "Stories," a collection of pictures by Nura which are to be colored by the children themselves and which serve as suggestions for stories to be written from them (Marguerite Mergentime; $1.50). "Max and Moritz," translated by Christopher Morley and illustrated by Jay, is published by William Morrow and Company ($2).

Among the "highly useful little books of an informatory nature," written for younger children, are "The Ragamuffin Marionettes," by Frances Lester Warner (Houghton Mifflin; $1.75); "The Picture Book of Animals," a collection of remarkably fine animal photography selected by Isabel Ely Lord (Macmillan; $2.50); "Beasts of the Tar Pits," by W. W. Robinson (Macmillan; $1.75); Adele Gutman Nathan's "The Farmer Sows his Wheat" (Minton, Balch; $2); "The Iron Horse," by Adele Gutman Nathan and Margaret S. Ernst (Alfred A. Knopf; $2); "How It All Began, by Janet Smalley (William Morrow; $2); "Magic Portholes," by Helen Follett (Macmillan; $2.50); "The Picture Book of Rivers," by Allan McNab (Macmillan; $2); and "Men at Work" (Macmillan; $1.75), a book containing excellent photographs, by L. W. Hine, of the forgotten men behind the machines.

Some Reprints for Children

PRECOCIOUS sufferers from wanderlust may, by benefit of printers' ink, scratch their itching feet on the volcanic ridges of Galapagos or, if more romantic than scientific in their inclinations and with a fancy to go farther out to sea, battle the white whale that swam the Pacific a hundred years ago. Mr. Beebe's book—a compilation, simplified for junior readers, of the scientific adventures which have previously appeared for adults—conducts a tour from Panama to Borneo, making the longest stop at those recently born and desolate volcanic islands which played so large a part in the studies that led Charles Darwin to his theory of evolution. Strange creatures fly, swim and crawl through Mr. Beebe's story: the ugly, grinning iguana, the brilliant-banded wrasse, millions of crabs, birds, some peculiar to those regions, others close relatives of species familiar to all of us. The octopus he meets under the sea seems to have become milder since the days of Monte Cristo; he merely stares at the stranger in his submarine world and finally swims away. (Putnam's; $2.50.)

It is almost a hundred years since J. N. Reynolds wrote of "Mocha Dick," the legendary whale of the Pacific

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whose capture established the supremacy of early Nantucket over British whalers. Herman Melville's great novel, "Moby Dick," is based on this original account. The illustrations by L. L. Balcom—of early whaling vessels, preparation of equipment, harpooning, boats shattered by angry whales—are spirited complements of an exciting story. (Scribner's; $3.50.)

The field of adventure in M. Fabre's book limits itself to forty acres of farmland; insects familiar to most American children are the subjects of investigation—beetles, crickets, cicadas, the praying mantis, the glow-worm and such—but some of the battles are, in miniature, quite as exciting as conflicts among the lords of the jungle. It is unfortunate that no artist contributed illustrative evidence of the magic colors described by Mr. Beebe in his undersea explorations; M. Fabre's account of the lives of his humbler subjects is made richly colorful by the illustrations of E. J. Detmold. (Dodd, Mead; $3.)

Will James's invitation, written as a preface to "Lone Cowboy" from Montana in 1930—"If you have seen the cow country and are acquainted with the lay of it, you'll have a lot of fun recognizing the spots where I drifted thru. If you don't know the cow country, I think you'll like to come out and get lost in it for a spell. . . . Here's a gentle horse for you—climb on and follow me"—should be acted on quickly by his younger readers if they are not to learn that the flavor of the old West is to be found no longer in the country itself, but only in such writings and illustrations as "Lone Cowboy" contains. Thomas Nelson Page's "Two Little Confederates" and John Fox, Jr.'s, "The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come," stories of another vanishing America, are again presented in beautifully illustrated volumes (Scribner's; $2.50 each). But the new order surrounds them all; each of the three is wrapped in celophane.

J. F. Lewis.

The Sovereignty of Teaching

Educating for Citizenship, by George A. Coe. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 220 pages. $2.

Education and the Modern World, by Bertrand Russell. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 240 pages. $2.50.

Education for Political Citizenship, by David Snedden. New York: Teachers' College, Columbia University. 196 pages. $2.50.

Education and the Social Crisis, by William Heard Kilpatrick. New York: Liveright, Inc. 90 pages. $1.25.

MR. COE'S "Educating for Citizenship" and Lord Russell's "Education and the Modern World" supplement each other. Both deal drastically with the realities of education today; both are in the truest and boldest sense subversive of the present social order; and both present ways by which education as the special function of a society existing for its own betterment can lead humanity into a better world.

The two authors take the same point of departure, the old query whether education should train good individuals or good citizens. To both the question resolves itself into the proposition that the two aims are inseparable. A satisfactory life, according to Lord Russell, requires both "an internal harmony of intelligence, emotion and will, and an external harmony with the wills of others. . . . The fundamental characteristic of the citizen is that he cooperates." Mr. Coe finds that two marks of a reasoned education for citizenship are, first, "definite convictions as to what constitutes worth-while living," and second, a "dominant interest . . . in socially shared values." They would both agree in the definition of the aim of education "to make human beings who will create a better world."

Mr. Coe's book, as its title indicates, is the more limited in its scope and exact in its procedure. With the thesis that "what constitutes goodness in a citizen depends upon what constitutes goodness in a state," he examines the behavior of the state and its influence upon education. The fact that "every state in history has been conducted in the interest of a predominantly privileged class" stands at the outset of his inquiry. Obviously the immediate aim of education for the individual is to procure admission into this class, and this aim has been rationalized into the monstrous creed that "the good of society is promoted by teaching students how to make the most money." The root of the trouble is in the conception of the state as something existing apart from, and independent of, the persons composing it. It is this notion which gives to government the authority to sacrifice those persons to its own ends, or rather to the ends of those by whom it is controlled, first as docile voters and last as enthusiastic cannon fodder. Mr. Coe elaborates the distinction between the state as something to be obeyed and as something to be used; between a mechanism to be appreciated according to the blueprint of the Constitution, and a function to be criticized according to values experienced. "The public school," says Mr. Coe, "is the state engaged in teaching; the sovereignty of the state permeates every activity of the school." Sovereignty of this sort is not a thing to be worshiped but a thing to be entered into and enjoyed. This is the meaning of democratic self-government and such self-government should begin in the school.

Mr. Coe attacks the nationalistic tendency in education, and emphasizes the good fortune of the United States in that the control of its schools is vested by the Constitution not in the federal government but in the several states, which may maintain "the most rigorous training of critical judgment with regard to political facts." This good fortune is mitigated by the intolerable intrusion into the realm of education for citizenship by the War Department of the federal government under the National Defense Act. The civic instruction promoted by this means is devoted to militaristic nationalism, and is in contravention of every democratic impulse, from public ownership to international peace.

Lord Russell's book is more discursive than Mr. Coe's, and treats specifically more factors in education, such as religion, patriotism, class feeling, sex, competition, propaganda. Most of these are implicit in Mr. Coe's thesis. The subject of propaganda is an instance of the different methods by which the two writers reach the same conclusions. They agree that propaganda is inevitable in communication among human beings about matters concerning social welfare and calling for decision and action. They agree that such matters are a vital part of education. Mr. Coe gives a series of suggestions by which the pupil may be tested, or may test himself, in correction of his attitude. Mr. Russell proposes to subject the pupil to propaganda from opposite sides of every vexed question. "Communism should be debated on the radio on alternate Mondays by the Soviet Ambassador and Mr. Winston Churchill. . . . On Tuesdays, India should be debated between Gandhi and the Viceroy; on Wednesdays Christianity, between Stalin and the Archbishop of Canterbury." In regard to nationalism, Mr. Russell takes the same position as Mr. Coe, with somewhat more emphasis. "Nationalism is un-

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doubtedly the most dangerous vice of our time—far more dangerous than drunkenness, or drugs, or commercial dishonesty, or any of the other vices against which a conventional moral education is directed."

Special interest attaches to Lord Russell's chapter on "Education under Communism," if it be true that "until the issue between communism and capitalism is decided one way or the other, world peace cannot be secure, whatever machinery may be created." Education under communism has one great advantage: it is in practice what under democracy it is in theory, *i. e.*, an orientation and a discipline toward a clearly avowed end, an answer to the question: "How to employ the power of the whole people acting as the state, to further the economic well being of the whole people." There is under communism no possible cleavage between the ideals of the school and those of society. Both move toward the same goal. "The Soviet school aims not only at understanding the world, but transforming it." Mr. Russell is not blind to the dangers in education under communism. He finds the atheist school of the Soviets and the orthodox school of the West equally guilty of the intellectual crime of asserting propositions as axioms—for example, those concerning the future life, about which nothing certain may be known. He contemplates the possibility that "if a conquering dogmatic Marxism were to replace Christianity, it might be as great an obstacle to scientific progress as Christianity has been." But if he finds objections as a philosopher, as an educator he looks to communism with hope:

> Communism offers a solution of the difficult problem of the family and sex-equality. . . . It gives children an education from which the anti-social idea of competition has been almost entirely eliminated. It creates an economic system which appears to be the only practicable alternative to one of masters and slaves. It destroys that separation of the school from life which the school owes to its monkish origin, and owing to which the intellectual in the West is becoming an increasingly useless member of society. It offers to young men and women a hope which is not chimerical and an activity in the usefulness of which they feel no doubt.

Messrs. Snedden and Kilpatrick, both professors of education in the Teachers' College of Columbia University, contribute to the same theme books which represent widely different points of view. Mr. Snedden laments "the unpleasant fact that as yet there exists in America—and nowhere else—a body of teachers primarily concerned with civic education." Although this statement is precisely the opposite of what Mr. Snedden means to assert, his book is in effect a manual of procedure for such teachers when and where they shall be instituted. As a manual of technique, this book is suggestive, but Mr. Snedden begs the question whether the type of citizenship based upon our present political system is adequate to a period of social change. His attitude of complacency finds expression in such sentences as "American political citizenship is, and has long been, of course fairly good—otherwise our varied and complicated political societies could not have functioned at the fairly high levels of political competency which have usually been the case."

Mr. Kilpatrick, on the contrary, agrees with Messrs. Coe and Russell that the fundamental evil of society is that "our system is one of striving for individual advantage over others." The school contributes to "the anti-social miseducation of our people" by teaching youth "to use their talents not to help society, but rather in fact to live as parasites upon society." The author agrees with Mr. Snedden that "Education can hardly be true to itself or its obligations in any full sense unless it becomes in fact a profession organized and ready to assume its social responsibilities," but he would insist on a wider definition of the latter term. To think in terms of social responsibility, not "of subject matter and mere school training," is the professional duty of the teachers. To develop in pupils a spirit of coöperative activity for the common good, and a technique for "group leadership" is the essential training for citizenship. "It is true," he admits, "that there can be but inefficient social education by the school so long as the institutions of the social and economic world work directly against the effort of the school," but it remains the objective of the school "to help society change for the better and to change the school accordingly."

Clearly if this plan is to be successful it will be through an enlightened, radical and militantly organized teaching force, conscious of its power and its responsibilities, capable of gaining the support of public opinion against the representatives of vested interests. Under democracy, even more than under communism, the teachers are the only crew who can work the ship of state. Their function is implicit in the democratic process which reveals its vitality only in a capacity for constant advance in the distribution of social values. To quote Mr. Coe: "The fear of revolution has no proper place in a school, but only fear that the citizens may not be competent to understand their wants or to cooperate in supplying them."

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Tackling King Football

King Football, by Reed Harris. New York: The Vanguard Press. 256 pages. $2.

LAST SPRING Reed Harris was expelled from Columbia University largely as a result of the articles he wrote about football in The Columbia Spectator, of which he was editor-in-chief. His expulsion led to a student strike, which in turn contributed to a radical movement now making headway in many colleges. This fall, in a book written with a sort of slapdash vigor, containing information, opinions and personal anecdotes, but lacking in depth and clarity, he returns to the attack against "King Football."

Reed Harris is convinced that football ". . . has become a Frankenstein, threatening to throttle what is left of American higher education." What he means is that higher education has produced a monster, football, which is threatening to destroy its own creator. This monster he assails from every side; in his eagerness for battle, he is not very careful in choosing the missiles he hurls against it. His criticisms are culled from sources as different and conflicting as the views of the aristocrat repelled by football's commercialism, of the pacifist who resents its violence, of the individualist who dislikes its collectivism and of the reformer who regards it as corrupt.

A correct analysis of football must seek to define its particular part in that complex of conditioning and experience which is termed a higher education. Although Harris sees that football is somehow related to the whole academic set-up, he fails to understand the nature of the relationship. For, unless education is artificially restricted to mean book-learning, football is not, as Harris terms it, a "parasite"; it is a part of college education as wholly characteristic as classes, secret societies or "bull sessions."

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Football fulfills the need in American education elsewhere supplied by political activity, military training, field gymnastics, etc. It gives to students that disciplined mass activity, regimentation if you will, which despite Harris's individualistic aversion has always been an essential part of human training. The fact that most students do not participate actively is unimportant. The movies have influence which ranges far beyond the glare of the Kleig lights in Hollywood.

Officially an amateur performance, the game has been commercialized by competition for players. Harris bestows his contempt on football players because they are football workers, accepting pay. Yet, except for a few stars, their returns are not excessive. Their jobs involve considerable risk. Like other workers in university employ, they are often subject to ruthless exploitation. They undergo long hours of grueling practice under slave-driving coaches. And they have to meet the competition of wealthy students—scabs, one might call them—who play "for the fun of it."

Chief support for football comes, not from the "less desirable graduates," as Harris claims, but from the most influential ones, and from the trustees and administrators. For the prime purpose of education is not to impart "the ability to think straight," an impression which Harris has gained, perhaps, from doorway inscriptions. Its first object is to make students satisfied with present society. In this process football, although not king, plays an important auxiliary role. It canalizes the need for mass activity into relatively innocuous channels, making students tractable.

Football will survive till either those who control our schools find some better substitute, or changing conditions render it inadequate. That a change is now occurring seems indicated by dwindling student attendance at games, and increasing student interest in new forms of mass activity. Under new conditions the survival of our educational system will depend on its ability to control these new forms. It is for this reason that authorities have cause to be alarmed over such occurrences as the Columbia strike.

EDMUND STEVENS.

False Gods

The Gods Arrive, by Edith Wharton. New York: D. Appleton and Company. $2.50.

IN "HUDSON RIVER BRACKETED" Mrs. Wharton surveyed New York's Bohemia and was annoyed. And as she guides Vance Weston, the author whose progress from the Middle West to the Atlantic seaboard she has already traced, into the midst of the left-wing American literati in Paris, her irritation deepens. Here, she admits, there is a brilliance, a closeness of argument, lacking in the Greenwich Village groups. But the speciousness, the basic frivolity, above all the lack of mental order! Not that she does not understand, even pride herself on understanding, the tortuous irregularities of the creative process—this is, in fact, the old story of the artist's struggle to fit the mysterious eruptions of inspiration into a humanly livable existence—but that, nevertheless, one feels behind her sympathy a relentless belief in the final goodness of her own creative process and her own form of discipline.

With Vance is Halo Tarrant, the wife of the Review editor who, it will be remembered, found her not sufficiently tireless at the full-time job of "understanding" him. Halo is unmistakably a heroine—not one of the feeble and forlorn human beings who double on their tracks and do unaccountable violence to their own feelings—but a steadfast, womanly creature with a sure instinct for what Mrs. Wharton, despite her fair-mindedness, obviously thinks of as The Right. As Vance's mistress, Halo finds herself subject to a number of unexpected confusions and maladjustments. Tarrant's sudden decision not to permit divorce proceedings destroys her whole plan of living, leaving her with no agreeable alternative. For a temporary challenge to the conventions, in the traditionally gallant and high-minded manner, she had been prepared. But to find herself forced either to build up a life with people who outrage her deep sense of social forms or to drag her lover into a succession of solitudes, is more than she had bargained for.

The villainess who further complicates Halo's problem is cut to a pattern as conventional as her own. Floss Delaney, an old love of Vance's youth, albeit one who had brought him a bitter disillusionment, turns up at Monte Carlo with a newly acquired fortune and an international male following. The affair between these two, or rather Vance's attempt to have an affair with Floss, desperately injures the relation between Vance and Halo and finally brings about his departure for America. But there is the reunion of true lovers at the end which the title calls for. And there is an implication of that other homecoming which Mrs. Wharton may have had in mind when she suggested the departure of the half-gods; for after publication of a Paris-inspired novel called "Colossus," Vance begins to draw away from the "microcosmic" school of writing and to seek a more personal revelation.

Mrs. Wharton is not an author whom one thinks of as being controversial. Yet if ever issue was squarely drawn and sides unbudgingly taken, it is in this novel. Except for its excellent craftmanship, in which the author never fails, this passionate intellectual partisanship is perhaps the most distinctive thing that it has to offer.

MARGARET CHENEY DAWSON.

Book Notes

BELLES LETTRES

THE CRAFT OF WRITING, by Percy Marks. *New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 239 pages. $2.50.*

This book is written for the novice—obviously the enterprising novice, for Mr. Marks not only discusses the use of words and the ingredients of good style, but also considers the technique and essence of the essay, formal and informal, the short story, the "plot" novel and even the psychological novel. Fully aware that no textbook can honestly advance formulas for creative writing, the author limits himself to advice, opinion, theories and prejudices. He treats most rules of writing with condescension, advocates more destructive criticism, and sums up most of his advice with the admission that truly constructive criticism can come only from the student writer himself. Although Mr. Marks's theories are often dogmatic and personal, his book does as much as any intelligent textbook can do for the student of writing.

PATTERN AND VARIATION IN POETRY, by Chard Powers Smith. *New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 423 pages. $4.50.*

The notion of pattern and variation in poetry was suggested to the author by the title of John Livingstone Lowes's "Convention and Revolt in Poetry"; the plan and content of the present book go a good way beyond that suggestion and produce not merely a textbook of verse methods, but actually a treatise on esthetics. The presentation and study of the technique of poetry, based on the notion of pattern and variation, is an exceedingly thorough and—to those who need it—a valuable piece of work, profusely illustrated with quotations. The esthetic put forward is not of the same order: inadequate definitions hobble the author's intention and limit the significance of what he has to say.

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Travel

SOUTH AMERICA: Lights and Shadows, by Kasimir Edschmid. *New York: The Viking Press. 408 pages. $5.*

Mr. Edschmid's achievement is to make clear that the South American states are split up, not out of a perverse taste for disunity, but because nature and history have placed barriers and fixed racial personalities; and that their political instability is not a matter of temperament, but the consequence of social and economic inequalities. In most of South America a Spanish and mixed-breed ruling class keeps the Indians in a pitiful state of subjection; the result is endemic revolt. Where, as in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay, there is no exploited Indian class (the Indians having been exterminated); or where, as in Brazil, the European and Indian and Negro have mixed amicably to produce what travelers unite in characterizing as perhaps the politest and most genial race in the world, political conditions are relatively stable and would be entirely so if dollar imperialism were not present as a constant irritant. Mr. Edschmid's big, handsome book is one of the sanest and most interesting travel books of recent years. It spends very little time on description and consists chiefly of conversation and character sketches. The South America that we greet in its pages is not the continent of enormous rivers, jungles and mountains, but a group of nations kept turbulent by social and economic conflicts.

Fiction

SAD INDIAN: A novel about Mexico, by Thames Williamson. *New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.*

The Eskimos, the Hunkies, inarticulate and simple people in general, have preoccupied Thames Williamson almost to the exclusion of other subjects from his novels—and with good results. But never before has he projected such types quite so well as in this story of a full-blooded Indian who comes into Techichilco to sell his maize. Juan remains, throught sheer inertia, to live with a half-breed woman whom he despises and, after a long bout with pulque and the knifing of another half-breed, finally leaves to return to his native country. By some intimacy of style, the rhythm of Juan's life is identified with the movement of the work. The Indian's vital being seems continually hidden, lying in wait for something that will, probably, never call it forth. The color of the place—the fiestas, the simple customs, the contradictory religious beliefs—is not just pasted on; it is the soil from which Juan's actions spring. What happens, happens spontaneously, and Juan and the others get into it and out of it as naturally as New Yorkers get into and out of subways.

Contributors

Claude E. Robinson, who has made an exhaustive survey of the straw vote under the auspices of the Columbia University Council for Research in the Social Sciences, recently published a book on the subject, "Straw Votes: A Study of Political Prediction," which appeared under the imprint of the Columbia University Press.

Frederic Nelson, on the editorial staff of The Baltimore Sun, recently returned from service as London correspondent for that paper.

Hendrik Willem Van Loon has recently supplemented his popularized histories and social treatises by his "Geography," which is at present on the best-seller list.

Edmund Stevens is studying for his Ph. D. degree at Columbia University. He took an active part in the trip to Kentucky last spring of college students investigating conditions there, and participated in the student strike which resulted from the expulsion of Reed Harris. He is at present chairman of the Committee for the Student Congress Against War.

Margaret Cheney Dawson, who has been associated with various New York publishing houses, has done book reviews for the last five years for The Herald Tribune Books and occasionally for other periodicals.

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